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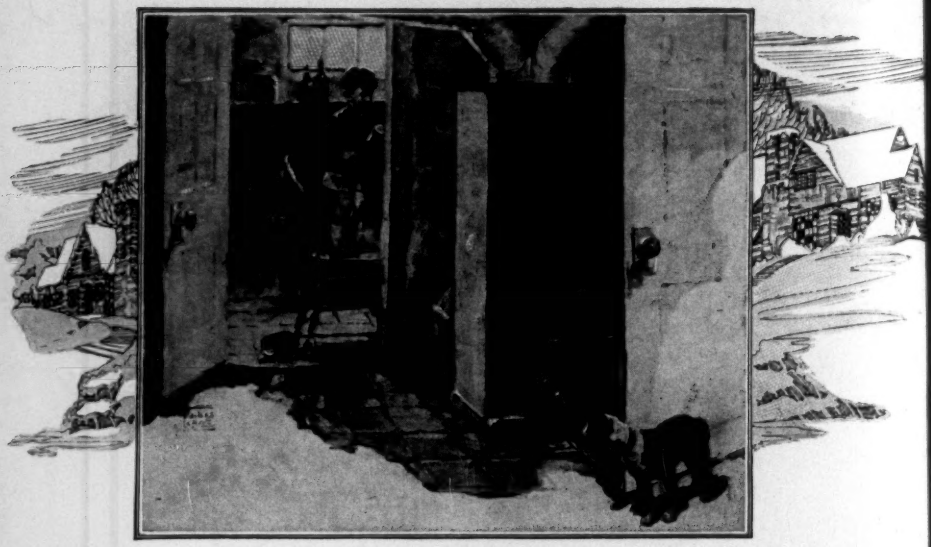

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IN THE MOUNTAINS

By Charles A. Platt

Courtesy of the Kennedy Galleries

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Harpers Magazine

THE FOOLS' PARADE

A CHRONICLE OF ESCAPE

BY JOHN W. VANDERCOOK

Author of "Black Majesty"

PART I

With slouch and swing around the ring
We trod the Fools' Parade.
We did not care: we knew we were
The Devil's Own Brigade:
And shaven head and feet of lead
Make a merry masquerade. . . .
—The Ballad of Reading Gaol.

THE waning moon topped the jungle wall across the river, and a path of pale light lay across the black water toward us. A spotted jaguar barked somewhere far away.

LeBrun, who sat with me on the porch, rose from his chair and disappeared into the dark room behind us. He returned in a moment with a smoking lantern and hung it from a beam.

The Frenchman sat down and ran his fingers through his thin white hair.

"Habit, M'sieu." He explained. "Habit and fear. First cousins. A puddle of light like this helps to shut the night out. . . . I am an old man and no longer sensitive. At night I am afraid—of all that." He flung out his arm to include the mounting, brooding shadow of the jungle, the medley of faint sounds that came from it. "A lantern keeps those out. Memories do not crowd in so fast."

He stopped abruptly and turned his face toward me, lifted so that the rays from the lamp streamed down on it. "It is strange," he said, "how one comes to accept the world's estimate. . . . How old, M'sieu, do you think I am? Past seventy?"

I shook my head—hesitantly.

His intense, sharp voice tumbled on. "Yet it would not surprise you? Of course not. Look at me. My hair is white. My skin," he held out his hand, "is like a mummy's. Every bone in my body shows! And last week, on my word, I celebrated my birthday by driving my gang of Javanese to pick the Dutchman's coffee in half the time the job was worth. That birthday was my fifty-first. This dead, dry thing I am is

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by all accounts in life's prime." My host leaned stiffly back.

"You know that I rotted six years in the prisons of Cayenne. I was a thief, so with superb logic France stole my blood, strength, health, soul, all but my precious life! To cherish that was my own fine notion." LeBrun's swift hands lashed with a gesture of incredible contempt. His tone became oily with a fierce and agonizing irony. He bowed toward me from his chair. "You see in me, my friend, the living embodiment of the most puerile fault of which life or literature is capable—anticlimax!

"In a word, M'sieu, I mean just this. I was a thief and was caught and sent to Cayenne. That was disaster. I summoned courage to escape—four starved, half-broken men and I attempted the jungle without food, tools, maps, or means. That, M'sieu, was the happy ending! Then, I survived. I outlived my friends. . . . In the great jungle I found magnificence. And I quit grandeur—for what? Jésu, for such a foolish thing. For life!"

Suddenly LeBrun was quiet and the heavy, humid equatorial dark embraced us.

I had guessed at LeBrun's history. No traveler who comes to Dutch Guiana —or Suriname, as the residents of the country call it—stays long without hearing something of the few lonely Frenchmen who live there. The stolid Dutch planters, very secretly, of course, point at them when they walk past in the hot sunshine of the streets of Paramaribo. "He escaped through the jungle, Mijnheer. Gott, it is extraordinary! Eight months to trek one hundred miles! But one must not ask questions."

To the famous penal settlements of Cayenne, adjoining Dutch Guiana, France exiles her criminals, traitors, and enemies. Sometimes a convict escapes. Rarely, very rarely, he survives. LeBrun was one who had.

The Frenchman had let his pipe go out and sat huddled in his chair, his head thrust forward as if he peered with failing eyes at some past precious thing. After his outburst his thin mouth had softened. We could hear the pale whispering of a breeze through the mango trees that formed a screen between the big house and LeBrun's whitewashed bungalow.

LeBrun's voice broke in. "M'sieu, you are no doubt curious. I think perhaps in the night like this with you, a stranger, I can meet again old friends."

He paused, cleared his throat, and began.

"My background does not matter. Middle class, a cheap cleverness, then crime, conviction, and the hulks. A swift and commonplace story. That is not my tale. I will begin on a certain afternoon, an afternoon of brutal heat in the gutters of the prison city of St. Laurent, just a hundred miles from here across the boundary river that divides French Guiana from Dutch. I was barefoot as are all the convicts of that burning town, and with bent back and eyes red from sickness grubbed at the filthy task of scavenging the streets. I was not the man I am now, M'sieu. You would not have recognized me. Now, I am successful, well fed, the contented foreman of a rich Dutchman's coffee farm. Then I was Pierre LeBrun, the thief, with no hope before me but long years of exile in the foulest prison colony in all the world. No hope—until this afternoon I speak of.

"My partner in the street cleaning, who had worked beside me for more than thirty months, was Léon Acquarone. Once he had been a clever lawyer, a graduate of the universities, and a man of power and fortune. But he was a fraud, a betrayer of trust, and at last a common barefoot convict like myself in the mud of a negro town. He spoke to me of a thing brave, brave beyond your comprehension, M'sieu. His project was escape.

"Even five years in the Cayenne prisons had not dulled Acquarone's

intellect or downed that vanity clever men have in the omnipotence of their wit. He confided in me fully. He had, he fancied, worked out every detail of the adventure he proposed. . . . This was seventeen years ago, but at this moment I can see his face as he leaned toward me. Acquarone was a fraction taller than I. His skin, drawn tight by long starvation over the sharp, long frame of his nose and the bones of his cheeks, had cooked to a yellow brown. He was not pretty. But his eyes, in that world of death beyond the river, still had fire in them.

"'You may assist me, LeBrun,' the lawyer said. Before that moment the thought of escape had not so much as touched the fringes of my mind. From then on—for a time—I was Acquarone's servant. He was my superior in class, in intellect. He had even been my better in crime. Now the fact that he had planned toward a new future showed him to be my master in point of courage, too."

LeBrun broke off suddenly and turned toward me. Again his dark, weathered face took on a look of furious irony. For a phrase or two he imitated my voice and accent.

"Escape indeed! What of it?"

He scraped his chair a little nearer mine and rested one elbow on the arm to give the gesturing of his hand full play. His shook his finger with deliberate emphasis.

"You have not been a prisoner in Cayenne, so you do not understand. Let me explain. French Guiana, just east of here, is a great district. Within its borders are many thousand square leagues of dense, unknown jungle. There are cities, rivers, and plains of savannah grass, also there are three tiny famous islands a little way beyond the mainland out to sea, 'Les Iles de Salut.' To translate, M'sieu, from prison parlance, the Farewell Isles: Devil's Island for the traitors, St. Joseph, and Ile Royale. Everywhere over the colony there hangs a pall of horror. The city of Cayenne, which gives its name to the whole district, and the river port of St. Laurent lie in regions which might be rich. But they have no existence except as hells where there are prisons. In my time there were nearly twenty-five thousand condemned men in Guiana, both behind bars and in perpetual exile outside the walls. Most were white Frenchmen. Some blacks and Arabs from the African colonies. Over them watched a small handful of paid officials. Yet discipline there was superb and, though many died before their time—died gratefully!—few escaped. Why? The explanation is simple. There!"

LeBrun pointed.

"The jungle, that dread, impenetrable wall. It hems the prisons round on every side. The runaway runs into that. He goes barefoot without supplies, with no knowledge of where he goes except that his course lies westward toward the Dutch settlements. Acquarone suggested that we plunge into that living darkness. Because of his intellect, the lawyer said, he would lead. He would undertake the business of meeting every situation—both in St. Laurent and later in the forest. My part was to recruit the rest of our band. Acquarone named two men who shared my cell, Abbémon, an unfrocked priest, and a big Breton peasant named Brierre. Both were conspicuous. In spite of the long years of starvation—every Cayenne prisoner is kept mortally hungry every hour of his life, M'sieu—the priest and the peasant were strong. Fever and sun and sorrow had failed to soften the hard muscles in their arms and breasts and thighs. They were men of exceptional height, Abbémon six feet, and Brierre still taller. But alone among the strong men of the St. Laurent settlement they were not bullies. Acquarone had noted that.

"Before long I broached the project to Brierre. Brierre had once been a pauper fisherman but he had lived in St. Laurent for many years. He was a murderer sentenced to Cayenne for life. In a

time of famine he had strangled his baby the day it was born. It was the eighth of his brood. He had killed his baby, he said, because he loved it and could not bear to see it live only to die because there was no food. After that it became legend in the prison that Brierre had not spoken a dozen words.

"A cell in St. Laurent is a fearful place. There were nineteen others lodged with me in a moldy box fifteen feet square with a ceiling so low the shortest of us could press his palms against it. Twelve narrow shelves of canvas supported by short wooden poles driven into the masonry were bunked in tiers of four on three walls. Some slept on these, the rest on the damp dirt floor. No covers are permitted even when a man's half-frozen with the ague of malaria. A tiny barred window gave on the night sky.

"There was rarely a moment in that close, congested, stinking swelter when all of us slept. But it was vital I wait. Spies are paid with little doles of food. Men in Cayenne would sell their mothers for that.

"My time came. A cool breeze was blowing up from the sea, and all lay sprawled as silent and as awkward as dead men. I put out my hand and touched Brierre. He lay on the lowest bunk and I on the floor just under him. A fragile beam of light from the moon came through the little window and fell across his face. Brierre was a shouldering, slow, shy man. His cropped hair was so light as to be almost colorless, and his bland, quiet peasant face seemed always in a half-sleep of stolid gentleness. When I woke him he made no sound. I put my mouth near him and breathed as quickly as I could the outline of our plan; how Acquarone had made arrangements for us to be received in Suriname by friends of friends of his in France; how we were to leave St. Laurent, strike inland through the dense forest that bordered the boundary river, then cross on a raft, and work through the jungle toward safety. I told Brierre that and much more. His pale-blue eyes, strange and shadowed in the pallid, slowly moving moonbeams watched me with a look of wonder. Almost at once I sensed that my proposal failed to rouse him. This stupid peasant, I told myself, has neither imagination nor courage. Then abruptly I asked him to go with us. I was frank. I told him why we wanted him. We should need a man who could lift and break and carry. In exchange Acquarone would finance him home—or wherever he wished to go. Fleetly, he smiled. To my astonishment, he nodded. 'Yes, if you wish it, M'sieu,' he said.

"That was all. A man who lay near stirred and woke, and abruptly I ceased my talk. That look of marvel on Brierre's face—he was wondering at me, wondering that I, the little thief, had somehow found a lodging in my bitterness for that proud, erect thing, hope. He found me gallant, was prepared to risk his life to follow the splendid thing I so poorly symbolized.

"The next day at our work in the gutters I acquainted Acquarone with my success. Prisoners are allotted various tasks, and because the whole colony is a strong-walled jail they are seldom watched. Acquarone's thin lips drew back over his yellow teeth in a gleaming, almost joyous smile. Acquarone was a man whose passion in life was control of men. And till now through the dragging, bestial, hungry years he had been utterly shut away from the exercise of that control. Now he had again exerted influence he was stimulated as if by some strong drug. All the rest of that day, whenever the hot road was empty, he poured a babel of talk into my ears. Plans wild and sane gushed from his agile mind in a torrent; dreams of success, of quick and skilful defeat of all the terrors of the forest. Then, just at the day's end, when a negro guard with a rifle came along with his gang of laborers to take us to the prison for the night, he whispered to me I must somehow find a pris-

oner with money. He named Alphonse Gallay.

"I was startled and angry. Must I do everything for this man who claimed to be the organizer? But there was no time then for further talk. We fell into that straggling, solemn line of weary men and walked through the red twilight toward the white, bare walls of St. Laurent."

II

"I knew Gallay. No one in Cayenne did not. But how I was to approach him I did not know. Gallay, M'sieu, though technically a common convict, was private secretary to the warden of St. Laurent. We knew he was of good family. We knew he had been a swindler. Then, too, we had all heard of his sonnets. He had been at St. Laurent four years then, and each night he wrote a sonnet; each night one to a separate lady. At last, when the one thousand and first sonnet was completed, he started with a sigh at the first again to write a triolet, until all the thousand and one mistresses should again be duly praised. Once I had seen him. He was tall, slender, graceful, and extraordinarily handsome. His blue eyes were shaded by long lashes, and his moist lips, even in that baking tropic sun, had never dried and become cruel like those of the rest of us. It was well known that he was permitted to have money.

"But how to reach such a man? How, in God's name, induce him to gamble his life for the risk and horror of the jungle? Why think that he would not betray us? It was the big priest Abbémon who won him for us. I did not know how for many months. Then one night, in the depths of the forest, Gallay told me.

"We lay against each other in the half shelter of a fallen tree. By that time our coarse clothes had been torn off us by the brambles along our way. A rain came steadily down through the thick, cold darkness. Gallay's voice, as gentle, as soft, and as cultivated as if he were speaking to a lady over teacups in a salon, came to me from that nothingness of night. I remember his words now.

"'Pierre,' he said, 'if you live you will live because of fear. When I die I shall die because I am afraid. Fear, though we will not admit it, governs all our lives. Fear brought me here. Our friend Abbémon, who snores so sweetly there at your feet, taught me what the word means, as he has taught me ever since what courage is.' Gallay's voice trailed off, and I did not interrupt his silence. The rain, the lonely sound of the wind through the wet branches far above us, made sleep impossible. In a moment he went on. 'I don't think, Pierre,' he said to me, 'I've ever told you of that, my first meeting with our friend. He stopped me in a corridor at St. Laurent and spoke to me. I did not know him, but he knew my name. He lowered his voice—I think that's the only time I've heard good Bruno speak in less than a shout—and told me all in a breath that he and some others were going to escape; that he knew I had money; that I must come with him; and that it would not do, even if I gave him my precious francs, for me to remain safe behind—for I should be sure to betray him before your little band was beyond the shadow of the wall. . . . A good long breath, I grant you. I think I smiled. It was rather ridiculous to be bullied into such a thing by a barefoot giant whose name I did not even know. He stood close to me, but when I smiled he came still closer and I felt a sudden tiny pain underneath my heart. Abbémon held a knife beneath his shirt and he had pricked me with it. I understood. I said I would consider and let him know. Then he heard footsteps in the corridor and went away. I tried to forget. One morning I awoke in my cell and could not raise my head from my pallet. I found a long knife tangled in my hair, plunged deep into the boards. How it came there I did not know. Bruno had reached an arm through the bars in the darkness and pinned me like a fly. I

knew his threats were honest, and knew I should like a man with such a sense of melodrama. That was all. A few days later he passed the window of the office where I sat. He was in a line of men who were being marched to the quay to unload a transport. I caught his eye and nodded, and he smiled back at me. That smile, so sudden and so charming, made me on the instant no longer dread anything, except that I might never come to know him better.'"

LeBrun stopped. A breeze from the ocean had come up the river. It brought no relief from the oppressive, breathless heat that had hung over the coast for the past fortnight but now it swung and flared the lantern so it smoked. LeBrun stood up, removed it from its hook, rattled up the chimney and blew it out.

"My foolish little protector knows its service is wasted to-night," he remarked.

He sat down again and filled his pipe. The moon-flooded darkness seemed more luminous and, curiously, far more friendly than the lantern light. In the forest behind LeBrun's house a band of howling red monkeys took up their insane, high-pitched, measured chorus. The old Frenchman listened. The far-away wailing stopped with as little warning as it had begun. In the big house behind the grove of dark mango trees the last light went out. The Dutch planter had waited for me long enough.

"It is, no doubt, bad technic to tell you how Gallay came to join us before I have introduced you properly to Abbémon. Perhaps I have saved the best to the last. Bruno, Père Bruno Abbémon before he was unfrocked, shared the same crowded cell with Brierre and myself. To approach him was easy, but I must wait once more until all the rest were sleeping. My time came. I had grown haggard, even for Cayenne, by night after night of sleeplessness. When at last all was quiet I realized painfully that Abbémon that night was lying on the favored stretcher, the hard canvas strip highest on the wall underneath the barred window. To reach his ear I must stand on tiptoe, and my shaking body must come within an inch of three other men who lay on the bunks just under his. But I was in haste. The phantom of freedom danced eternally before my eyes. I put my mouth close to Abbémon's ear and spoke his name. He turned over and stared at me through the gloom. I put my finger to my lips and began to explain and plead. As I spoke his dark eyes stared and his heavy, red-lipped mouth relaxed in utter astonishment. Then he frightened me. Without warning he began to laugh—a great shout that must have waked the prison. He sat upright and swung his legs over so they hung from the edge of his bunk. He put his back against the mold-streaked stones of the wall and threw his great head up and laughed again. Abbémon slept naked. He made an appearance, I can assure you. I stood frozen where I was, too furious and too frightened to move. Instantly every man of the twenty in that tiny room was awake and the air was thick with questions, curses, and muttered, angry warnings. 'Shut up, you louse!' they threw at him. He pointed at me. He pointed not one finger but four, his whole left hand. It is a kingly gesture of contempt. 'It is the little one,' he said. 'He is going to leave us. Nay, he is kind enough to invite me. Do you understand, you fools? A brave little one is going to run away!'

"For a second there was absolute silence in the cell. Then an apache on the bunk on a line with my knees laughed shortly and reached out and slapped me behind. Several cursed Abbémon again. A few growled threats at him. And then they all resumed their sprawls and prepared to sleep again. There was silence. Do you understand, M'sieu? They had not believed him. . . .

"I do not know whether shame or hatred was uppermost in my heart at that moment. The gray, amorphous figures of the sleeping men in the darkness had moved, become savage and articulate, then they had grown still.

No one had believed me capable of courage.

"Abbémon spoke. He did not lower his tone.

"'Tell me more, little one,' he mocked. 'When is this adventure of yours to be? And whom else have you honored with an invitation? You are, of course, very, very serious?'

"I did not answer. Then he swung his leg and kicked me gently in the chest.

"'Confide in good Père Bruno. I am all attention.'

"'Enough of your reeking humor, Abbémon!'

"It was a prisoner on the ground near my feet. My eyes, well accustomed now to the faint light that reflected through the window from the starlit sky outside, were on Abbémon's face when the man spoke. In a flash I understood. It was all so childish, so dangerous, and so complicated that I cannot imagine how I had the wit to guess so soon. But Abbémon had force.

"He had published it for the sake of danger and because he loved mockery. But he was with me. He kicked me again, and said, 'Speak up.' . . . When I had spoken my piece he nodded, threw himself flat on his rack and turned over to sleep. The next night they put the light on us."

"The light?" I asked.

The old man nodded irritably. "Yes, yes. Abbémon's shouting brought the light. It is one of the quaint punishments in Cayenne. If there is any infraction of the prison discipline between six and six when all are locked in the cells, any noise or fighting, then the whole roomful is punished by the light. It is a bright oil lantern which is hung from a hook in the ceiling, and it must not be extinguished. That is all, simply a lighted lantern that flares all night. But in a prison that lies in a swamp bottom in this latitude you can imagine what it means; mosquitoes, gnats, and flies come in such swarms the air is fogged with them. After every such punishment one or more always comes down with fever. The whole colony is known to its unwilling citizens, M'sieu, as the dry guillotine. It is a graphic name?

"But I must get on. We concluded our planning. In three weeks the rainy season would come to an end. Then there would be several months of fair weather ahead of us. On a certain Tuesday evening Gallay was to forge the warden's name to a special work order bearing our five numbers. This would be given to a fat French warder named Manda, and he would let us out of our respective cells and march us from the prison to the outskirts of the town. There, having been well paid, he would leave us—to return to the prison with a concocted story of a struggle and the forged pass as an additional protection to himself. He risked nothing. The prison governors do not care if they have fewer mouths to feed.

"Thanks to Abbémon, we were relieved of the nervousness of secrecy. He had made our escapade the joke of St. Laurent. With a great foolish air of clownish mystery he had told everyone. His crude joke had become perfect when he added the name of the soft aristocrat, Gallay, and the dull lifeless fisherman, Brierre, to the list of conspirators. Outside, the business would have been born dull and have grown stupid beyond bearing. But topics of conversation are rare and nurtured preciously in the prisons of Guiana.

"The night of the escape came at last. A guard brought us our dinner. Then, when the big bowl was clean, the usual little groups were formed. Some stretched out on the canvas racks to talk. Brierre, a blond pile of a man, sat in a far corner, his head against the wall, his arms loose, and his bare feet thrust out. Abbémon laughed and made jokes and quoted Latin authors as was his habit. . . . I had begun to hate Abbémon. He was not a bully, it is true. It was not that. Rather did I fancy he used his big voice and his ready laughter, his learning and his class as stupid men might use their fists. Beneath the

storm of his vitality little men of lesser spirit bent and were bedraggled, as frail palm shoots are when a tornado wind laughs across the monotony of trees out there. I did not know him then for a man worn and gutted by a hounding loneliness.

"Then we heard steps in the corridor. Brierre straightened. Abbémon stopped in the midst of an oath. A warder in khaki stopped by our barred door. He fumbled with some keys and accompanied by a breathless, frightened silence, unfolded a little paper and read our names: LeBrun, Brierre, Abbémon.

"'The above,' he said, in a dry voice, 'have been transferred by special order to the river service. Come, you pigs.' We went out, and the door of our cage clanged to behind us. The guard gave a curt command and we dropped into step in front of him. Acquarone and Alphonse Gallay were with him. We had not seen them in the gloom.

"Our guard conducted us to the outer gates. At his word the man in charge unlocked them and swung them wide enough for us to get through. Up the main street we marched. The negroes of the town in the crazy doorways of their shanties sat and gossiped by wavering candlelight. Pad, pad, pad went our feet on the road Acquarone and I knew so well. Then the outskirts of the settlement; silhouettes of palm tops against the moonlit sky and the harsh, faint scraping of banana leaves along the way accompanied us. The guard lighted a cigarette and shifted his heavy carbine to his left hand. Before long the mounting, opaque shadow of the jungle rose before us. The road dwindled to a weed-grown path. Abruptly the guard grounded his gun. 'Enough,' he whispered. 'Pay up, and get on with your suicide.' We stopped and Gallay brought a little roll of notes from the pocket of his shirt. He began to count out five hundred francs, the sum agreed on, but the guard reached out his hand.

"'I'll take all that. You won't need money where you're going.'

"Abbémon cursed under his breath, and I could see Brierre's fists clench, but it was useless to protest. The moon was full—Acquarone had thought of that—and we could see one another plainly. The guard put a shining little whistle in his mouth and smirked cruelly at us over it. Gallay gave him the money.

"'You may be right at that,' Gallay said. 'May you spend it in some noble purpose.'

"The guard nodded, turned on his heels and started back the way we had come. We stood staring stupidly after him for a moment. . . . We were free.

"Acquarone snapped his fingers. 'Come,' he whispered, 'we must get thirty miles behind us before we can afford to admire the damned scenery. I will tell you again. This path here,' he pointed to where the trail vanished under the dense shadows of the forest, 'leads due south along the river bank. It will take us, with good luck, to a deserted lumber camp twenty miles from here. Till we have passed that we are as good as in gunshot of St. Laurent. Go quietly and go fast. Brierre, drop far enough behind us so you won't be disturbed by whatever sounds we make. And listen. That pig may yet send them after us.'

"With that he plunged into the dark."

III

"Swindler, thief, fraud, blasphemer, murderer; lawyer, criminal, aristocrat, priest, and fisherman — that was the order of our fools' parade. A varied company. The God who had forgotten us must have marveled how we'd so tricked the order of our destinies as to have found one another out from all the world.

"Now and then a moonbeam through a rift in the dark branches that met above our heads would illumine a silver puddle in our path, and one by one as each of us passed under we would take fleeting shape and then dissolve again into the velvet dark.

"Acquarone looked in those streaks of light like a lithe panther on a blood scent. I walked just behind him. His bony hands were held forward to feel out the shadows. His narrow shoulders were hunched in a little, and his back was bent. His dark eyes blazed when he turned to whisper to me. His hooked nose seemed as sharp and ravening as a vulture's.

"We kept on all night. No one spoke. Each was too lost in the maelstrom of his own hope and fear to have words for another. When the faint dawn appeared we came to the end of the path and plunged into the jungle. That instant stands clearer in my mind than almost any other." LeBrun paused.

"Have you ever faced the jungle, M'sieu? Perhaps you have seen a dog chase a bush rat, seen the rat reach the edge of a clearing and scuttle through some invisible opening into the underbrush? If so, you have seen the dog stop dead upon his haunches, bark weakly for a moment, and then walk away, tail hanging.

"Brierre and Abbémon took the lead, and Acquarone, though his eyes were angry, fell behind. On the clearing where the old lumber camp had stood we had found some plantain trees left to grow rank by those who had lived there. At Acquarone's order each tore down a monstrous bunch to carry on with us for food. To men weakened from lives such as we were leaving behind this added burden was almost more than we could bear. Struggling on behind Brierre, catching the branches and brambles he pressed back, falling now and again into a water hole left by the rot of some great tree, I felt my load grow heavier and my legs and arms weaker with each succeeding moment. Toward noon I stumbled over a root, fell headlong, and could not get up. I had tumbled into a sort of clearing about the high, buttressed roots of a silk-cotton tree. The others welcomed my fall. Brierre flung himself on the ground. As the others came up they followed our example. Almost fainting though I was, I noticed Acquarone was last to come. He had thrown away his burden, those precious plantains. No one questioned him.

"You know how the silk-cotton tree stands, how the slender wall-like roots grow downward and outward from the trunk, forming unroofed cabinets? By accident we had discovered that first day the only shelter for man in all the forest. In the afternoon we ate our plantains. To you, or even to me now, it would seem a vile food uncooked, but to us, with the hunger of the years, it was well enough.

"All of us slept that afternoon and into the night while the sweat and silence and gloom of the jungle floor cooled with the passing of the sun into a chilling damp. I awoke toward midnight to find my body trembling with an ague of cold. My shirt, which had caught in some sharp spines, was ripped from my shoulders to the hem. My back, scratched and goaded by a hundred briars, was so sore I groaned when my muscles moved below the skin. My feet were indescribable. We were barefoot. All were awake but no one spoke.

"From all about came the ceaseless clamor of the jungle night. Not far away we could hear the angry, curious grunting of a long-toothed boar whose nostrils had caught our strange scent. From many miles away came faintly the steady, secret dum-dum-dum-dum of a tom-tom, beaten by the slender, furious fingers of a savage witch man, remote in that equatorial land.

"Gallay was next to me. He leaned toward me and asked me who I was. I told him my name. We had never spoken before, do you realize that, M'sieu? He began to talk. Never had I heard a voice quite like his. He said, 'LeBrun, perhaps you may live, may escape from this. I wonder if you would do me a favor. Here, where is your hand?' He found it in the darkness and thrust into it a small paper package, soggy with the sweat of his body. 'I

wonder if you will be kind enough to care for them for me? It doesn't matter if I die if those are preserved. I am in them. You probably can't understand such things. Yet, somehow, one does not like to end utterly, does one?' Then he turned over and slept.

"That was the beginning of my friendship with Gallay. He would never take back his poems, though I urged them on him many times. . . .

"When at last that interminable night had ended, we set forth once more. Again we went in the same order. At first Acquarone, refreshed to his old instincts for power, went ahead to break the path. One knife-like whip of thorns across his cheek sent him behind. Acquarone, the leader, the lawyer, the organizer, never took the lead again. In a day the jungle had recast our fates.

"That day, that night, and the next day were repetitions of the first. Then we emerged on a narrow ledge on the edge of the forest beside the silent flow of the mighty river. Beyond us lay impassable, fetid swamp. And across the river, silent and forbidding in the twilight, was the free colony of Surinam. We saw with a great lifting of the heart. . . . Now our problem was to get across.

"At the point where we stood the river is fully half a mile wide. The rainy season was just over, so what was at all times a swift torrent was now a raging flood. As we watched, a great tree torn from its roots floated down the middle of the stream. A small red monkey clung to one of the branches.

"Acquarone had forgotten that at the end of the long wet season the river is most dangerous.

"We had no axes, or even knives with which to cut timbers for a raft. A periodic search had taken place a few days before and we had been stripped of the few poor tools we had collected. We knew we must use as our materials what has been used by two generations of those unhappy ones who have attempted what we were attempting.

"If ever you have passed in a boat along any of the streams of this country, M'sieu, you have seen those tall reeds that hem either side. They are as thick as a man's wrist, and very tall. They would have to be our vessel for the perilous voyage across.

"The plantains we had brought with us were soon gone. Some cocoanuts helped out our meager fare.

"Brierre was first to remind us we had work to do. He said nothing but he threaded his way through the rank grass and the snarled weeds toward the water. In a moment we could hear him splashing, hear the rasp of his breath and the creaking of the mocca-mocca as he dragged at them. Acquarone sat up, cursed with sudden, vivid fury the stiffness and the darting pain that racked his body and then ordered us sharply to get to our tasks. For himself, he said, he would clear the ground where we had made our informal camp. We would need a decent open place where we could work conveniently upon our raft without fear of being detected by any boats that passed us in the open river. Abbémon, Gallay, and I went to join Brierre.

"He stood almost to his waist in the shallow water. That sounds like a paradox, but I am literal. The wash among the tall stems was scarcely half a yard in depth, but the bottom mud was a fluid ooze in which one must mark time to keep from sinking helplessly above one's armpits. Abbémon and I scrambled toward Brierre, but Gallay hung back. I was already to my knees in water but looked back to the rise of ground where he was hesitating. I remember how he stood there. His coarse clothes hung in rags about him and where the skin showed through it was scratched and dirty; but his body was poised like an actor who delivers a graceful speech upon the stage. One hand was on his hip. With the other he made a graceful gesture. 'I am sorry, my friends,' he said, in that soft voice, 'but I wonder if I might be excused? I shall be far more useful if I help to clear

the camping place. Since childhood I have had a terror of snakes. Besides, I am not strong. I am very sorry. Perhaps I can rid myself of so foolish a fear, but not to-day.' We grunted some sound of assent and Gallay, with a little, strangely gallant bow, turned away.

"It was back-breaking work. Though the mud was soft, the roots clung like a curse of God. It took the combined strength of Abbémon and myself to wrench each one free. Brierre worked in silence and alone. Abbémon sang loud unfamiliar songs he told me were Latin hymns.

"I have said Abbémon was a priest. Did I tell you how he came to Cayenne? He had been curé of a wealthy little parish on the outskirts of Toulouse. His duties and his vows could never have weighed heavily on him. He came to Cayenne because he had melted up and sold a golden chalice from his church. It seems he needed funds to defray the costs of the many charming ladies he entertained at night in his chapel. The ecclesiastical authorities, after they had unfrocked him, were so infuriated they gave him over to the police. He came to Guiana in the hulks like a common felon. It never occurred to him he had committed a shameful crime. A thousand times he bellowed curses at the stupidity that had made him so careless as to be caught and called down double damnation on the family which had urged him into a profession for which he had so lusty a dislike. . . .

"By dusk we had piled a fair-sized hillock of reeds in the clearing Gallay and Acquarone had formed. That night, though they were wet from the river and slimy from the bottom mud, they made a pleasant couch. We lay in a dead tangle like dummies flung from a housetop and slept the dreamless sleep of weary men. The following days were repetitions of the first. Now our pile of stalks had grown so great we were ready to set about weaving our raft.

"We began. It had been a time of strenuous work and little food. But we had caught with our hands some oily river fish among the reeds and eaten them raw. Our enthusiasm was unabated. We were happy. For the first time in many years we were working toward a purpose, and that purpose was the fulfillment of our impassioned dream of freedom. We were toiling toward a resurrection of body and soul twice as glamorous and thrice as real as any the pale priests offer. This was our purgatory. We scaled its agonies with relish. The laughter and the talk and the exciting discoveries we began to make in friendship—a kingdom from which we had been exiled all our lives—turned the adventure into a queer junket, not at all a grinding tragedy. In a true sense, it was the culmination of our fretted, useless lives. We had found courage and felt the lifting of the soul and the sense of strength and joy that comes with its discovery. And we had found one another. We might learn to hate. But we were comrades and allies.

"Weaving the raft proved more arduous than we had anticipated. The stalks of reed were tough and springy. Our plan was to pile a series of diagonally woven mats one upon the other until the thing would be thick and heavy enough to support us. But the vines we used as rope broke continually, and the wet stalks when dry would twist into impossible shapes.

"However, we finished at last. It was a crazy, shapeless, savage seeming thing. And we, too, with our torn canvas clothes all befouled and bloodied, our hands ragged, and with two weeks' beard on our gaunt cheeks, were like weird ghosts from some deep pit of foulness. It seemed a lifetime had passed, and still our necks were in the shadow of the crescent knife and our torn shirts not yet beyond the fingers of the law.

"It took our combined strength to carry our handiwork to the water's edge. There, in the torrid yellow noon of a blazing day, we saw it float triumphantly upon the bosom of the river. Acquarone was the first to climb on

board. With a sinking of the heart we saw that even his slight weight lowered the raft ominously. Then I got on, next Abbémon, Brierre, and last of all, Alphonse Gallay.

"M'sieu, have you ever felt your heart break within your breast? When we were all on the raft it had sunk below the surface. We lay with our bodies tangled together and our heads strained up and back. The river lapped our lips. It seemed we had failed.

"It was Gallay who renewed our spirits. He showed us what we had not realized—that though our weight had thrust the raft down it still did not rest on the bottom—that as we urged it into deeper water it seemed to sink no farther. He suggested we go ahead, said that as for himself he minded a slight wetting not at all.

"The suggestion was welcome. We were men who too many times had known the hurt of hope that dies. We waited for nothing. We had nothing to take with us, nothing to leave behind.

"Brierre and Abbémon got long curved scoops of fibrous bark torn from the base of a palm trunk. Together, working their rude paddles with one hand while clinging with the other to the sinking raft, they forced us out toward the middle of the river. Then the current took us, whirled us round a dozen times and sent us hurtling down the stream.

"I have often thought how we must have looked to the red eyes of a black vulture that sighted us that day and followed us in the air. Just our heads and sometimes our shoulders came above the water. Now and again the working elbows of Brierre and Abbémon would splash the surface. Each whirlpool sent us deep down to come up again spluttering, half drowning, calling aloud with fear and the pain of water in our lungs. Our hair was long and tangled. Water flattened it across our brows so we looked like molded rats. Our eyes were bloodshot, our cheeks sunken, and our loose mouths whimpering. The carrion must have wondered how dead men could be so noisy. It did not leave us all the long relentless day."

LeBrun halted abruptly and as abruptly went on, but with a cold precision in his tone. "M'sieu, I have not perhaps told you a pretty tale thus far. What I must tell you now no words of mine can make clear. The current of the Marowyne River, as you know if you have seen it in time of flood, moves like a twisting arrow down the very center of the stream. It seems to take new sustenance at every yard from the half-peace of the waters that lie along the banks. All our struggles, all of the heroic efforts of Abbémon and Brierre were powerless to divert us toward the opposite bank. We were carried downstream—swift as a waterfall. Every moment brought us nearer to the crowded reaches of the lower river—and recapture. Never did we make an inch of headway toward the Dutch side.

"Bear in mind, my friend, all we had gone through. A little before sunset, after full five hours of that awful journey we could see the white walls of the prison we had left. We had been swept back to its very doors. We could see the boats along the quay. We imagined that each that moved was coming out to fetch us. Then a twisting eddy of the current sent us toward the Suriname side. We kicked and beat the water with our hands. And in the foul mud of a swamp of the left, the Suriname bank—the precious side of safety, we came at last to land. . . . I can tell you this, M'sieu, yet no gift of words is given me to describe the emotions of that day. Finally we struggled to shelter among the reeds and the sleep of exhaustion claimed us."

(In the second and concluding installment LeBrun—the sole survivor of the band—recounts their desperate adventures in a struggle lasting several months through swamp and jungle toward an objective only one hundred miles distant.)

BUSINESS AND THE GOVERNMENT

BY JOHN T. FLYNN

A GOOD many things have been done to American business in recent years to stimulate and sterilize it. Among other things it has been sloganized. Every properly equipped business enterprise or association now has a slogan. And one of the most notable is that which burns upon the banners of the United States Chamber of Commerce: *More Business in Government and Less Government in Business.*

This sentence, it will be observed, is not only a slogan but also a slam. Be good enough, it observes to that officious and meddlesome old person, our Uncle Samuel, to keep your whiskers out of our affairs and to look after your own with something of that wisdom which we employ in ours.

To support this battle-cry various champions of American business have brought forward an immense amount of evidence to show that there is too much government in business—too much government, in fact, in almost everything. It is our proud boast, they tell us, that we are a nation of laws and not of men; do we realize how much a nation of laws we are? They picture business as a huge giant, gagged and shackled like a moving-picture galley slave to his oar. Our federal laws, a diligent statistician informs us, number some 10,000. The statute books of the states carry some 500,000 more. Then we have another body of municipal and county ordinances which total over 9,000,000, so that our grand total of laws regulating us in all our movements from the cradle to the grave is ten million. Broadsides of statistics such as this are usually followed with the shocked comment that most of these laws are made to regulate and hamper business.

Yet is it all true? Are these amazing figures fair? Are they not a perfect example of what happens when a statistician goes into a frenzy and keeps flashing figures before our bewildered eyes until all meaning has gone out of them? A city, let us not forget, is a huge business institution with police, fire, school, health, and numerous other departments to maintain. If a school janitor's salary is to be raised, it is done by an ordinance. If a street is to be closed or opened, it is done by an ordinance. The mere management of all the administrative affairs of the city requires innumerable regulations which in a business would be called house orders. There are thousands of American cities and towns and each has its code of ordinances, all pretty much alike. To add all these together and arrive at a total of nine million laws and then hold them up as part of the great legal chain that binds business is hardly a fair management of statistics. The same thing is true of the laws passed by the state and federal governments. The last Congress enacted a total of some 1223 measures. Of these about 400 were resolutions and private bills. Of the remaining 800 all but a few were regulations affecting the control of the various government departments. A member of the House made an estimate of the number of laws of general application passed by that Congress, and there were only about 36—certainly not many more than that.

The truth of the matter is that while there is a flood of bills submitted to

every legislative body every year, there are really not so many laws passed as might be supposed. For instance, from the beginning of Congress up to 1925 there were passed some 52,000 measures. More than 32,000 of these were private bills—bills authorizing pensions or refunds or damages. There were not quite 20,000 actual laws passed: an average, during 136 years, of 150 laws a year. When we remember that among these are included the civil and criminal statutes, the laws governing the army, navy, post office, and all government departments, and the tax bills, the number does not seem large. And it must be remembered that many of these are laws repealing other laws.

We have some laws that get fearfully and wonderfully in our way, laws that are woefully unwise. But the fault here lies not in the quantity of legislation but in the folly of certain legislation.

II

If Congress and the legislatures do not enact more laws, however, it is not the fault of business. There are, to be sure, laws which regulate business and interfere with some of its plans. But most of the laws that control or hamper business have been passed—surprising as it may seem to those who clamor for "less government in business"—at the demand of business itself. If more laws are not passed to hinder business it is because Congress and the legislatures have the good sense and forbearance, often in the face of immense pressure, to resist the organized drives of various special business groups to push through new laws to serve purposes of their own. Innumerable bills are introduced into Congress and the legislatures every year to force business in some new direction or close up certain avenues to it altogether. But few of these proposals originate in the minds of legislators. They come from the legislative program committees of trade associations or from the special counsel of trade groups, and they come backed often by resolutions from trade conventions and chambers of commerce.

Before the present Congress was a week old, and while the public attention was being entertained with the political battle raging around Messrs. Vare and Smith, there appeared several measures known as the price maintenance bills. They have turned up at every session of Congress for several years. Behind them come marching hundreds of trade associations with banners flying, resolutions booming, and letters and telegrams pouring in on Congress for action. The independent grocers, dry goods men, and retail merchants generally, led and financed by the wholesale associations, are ranged in battle against the chain stores and large department stores. These great dealers, operating on a large scale, can buy cheap and sell cheap. Of course the wholesaler and the independent do not relish this, and no one expects them to. But do they try to defeat the practice without "government interference"? No, they try to bring the government into the fight on their side. Yesterday, perhaps, they cheered lustily when the speaker at the weekly Rotary Club luncheon denounced government interference in business. But to-day they apparently want more interference instead of less, and so they propose a price maintenance bill which permits a manufacturer to refuse to sell to any dealer who offers the article at a lower price than that fixed by the manufacturer.

In several states the wholesalers have urged a law limiting the number of chain stores per thousand of population in any given community. In one state it is urged that a limit be placed on the number of stores a single individual shall own. In still another it is proposed that the taxing power of the government shall be used as a club to bludgeon the chain store out of business for the benefit of the wholesalers. Each additional store a man or corporation acquires after the first one, according to this proposal,

is to be progressively taxed until the chain store man must either go out of business or raise prices. I have even seen a letter to Congress endorsing some of these anti-chain-store bills and anti-department-store bills typed on a letterhead bearing at the top the legend, "More business in government and less government in business."

Other marching legions of the trade associations descend on Congress with a "truth-in-fabric" bill. The men who make pure wool are in competition with the men who make a mixture of wool and cotton. There is nothing so shocking about mixing wool and cotton as one might suppose. It is not like mixing Scotch and wood alcohol. It may actually improve the fabric. But whether it does or not, the wool fabric men propose to have Uncle Sam on their selling staff. They demand government action: they want laws, inspections, government labels introduced into the fabric business. They may be the first to denounce the government for its officious meddling in the affairs of the railroads, but they appear to think a little meddling in the wool business would be an excellent thing. They think it is shameful interference with business to protect the citizen as he gets into his railroad coach, but it is quite proper to protect him as he steps into his morning tweeds.

At the beginning of last year the editor of a leading bankers' journal remarked that all the states save six would have legislatures in session during the coming year. "It is likely," he wrote, "that a vast number of new banking laws will find their way into the statute books." And how do you suppose they would get there? Would they result from politicians trying to cripple the banks, or from radicals trying to hinder the designs of capital? Let the editor tell you in his next sentence:

"The state bankers' associations in most states have taken the initiative to bring about the enactment of new laws to improve the condition of the banks and add to the protection of stockholders."

Some of these bankers' associations have actually advocated more powerful state banking departments armed with more potent weapons of control. Come, the bankers invite the government, and interfere with us some more!

Week after week the trade associations come pouring into the capital to put in their claims for interference. To date some nine hundred of them have shown up with flags flying at the Department of Commerce begging Mr. Hoover's bureaus to look them over and see what is the matter with them and tell them how to improve the management of their affairs.

The extent of the laws thus sponsored by business can hardly be estimated. For behind many apparently innocent provisions of law lurk the schemes of various special groups of business men seeking to gain some advantage or swat some competitor. A few years ago a large interest, disturbed by competition from a new quarter, got Congress to pass a law requiring a certain kind of guarantee to be stamped on the product of all manufacturers in that field. This seemed to be in the interest of the public. But the truth was that no stamping machinery had yet been invented which would put the required stamp on the product of the new competitor without destroying it!

The average trade convention is a perfect hothouse of proposals for government regulation. In one recent trade convention the delegates were very nervous about Bolshevik propaganda. One troubled orator thought he saw the source of all this red deviltry in the lack of religion among the workingmen. He very logically concluded that the way to exorcise the Red Demon out of our factories would be to infuse a little religion into the men. He proposed that this be achieved by posting the Lord's Prayer in a conspicuous place wherever men were employed in large numbers. This seems sufficiently futile and foolish, but it was not too foolish or futile to fail to enlist the support of the assembled business

men, or to fail to get itself embodied in a bill that was actually pressed upon at least one state legislature. An association of men in the hardware trade, casting about for something to regulate, hit upon school arithmetics; it went on record against the kind of problems and examples used in these arithmetics, claiming that many of them gave children an inaccurate idea of how business is conducted nowadays, and appointed a commission to study them! Whereupon the commission made the inevitable survey of some two hundred and thirty-one arithmetics and in the name of that embattled association got after the school boards and publishers about it until the books were made to conform.

Manufacturers of ladies' dresses are forever fulminating against the style bandits who promptly steal every new extravagance they fashion for the fair. Why, they ask in effect, cannot there be a law that will put the government behind the styles? Another group of jobbers think they are not getting full value out of salesmen who insist upon carrying side lines, and so they ask for a law that will punish any drummer who carries the samples of more than one concern. In almost every city, merchants war upon competitors from out of town who use house-to-house salesmen by demanding drastic "peddler" ordinances. The jewelers' associations have for years been cudgeling their ingenuity to invent new laws that would protect them from the competition of so-called "itinerant merchants." Each trade group emits yowls of dissent when it is submitted to some sort of regulation; but it in turn, you may be sure, has its own program of regulation for some other group. The landlord, for example, trembles for our free institutions when it is proposed to limit the rents charged for tenements; but he is equally indignant when someone suggests that we stop regulating the interest charged on real estate mortgages.

Of course the wrath of business which we see so violently in eruption over the interference of government is directed—at least so far as the propagandists are concerned—mainly at the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, the conservation policy, railroad baiting, the government entry into the merchant marine business, and government operation of Muscle Shoals and Boulder Dam. Yet anyone who has a taste for history may discover that while these measures interfere or propose to interfere with business, back of them originally were other great groups of business interests. The Interstate Commerce Commission was demanded not only by the embattled grange but by almost all the business interests of the country at the time it was created, save the railroads themselves and those interested in them. The Federal Trade Commission, so bitterly assailed and opposed at first and ever since by certain business groups, was demanded with no less earnestness by still others, and to-day it could not be abolished without a powerful lobby from some business sections giving battle. Every month dozens of business concerns are hauled before the Trade Commission for an accounting on the complaint of other business corporations. To-day many of the complaints before it, if not most of them, originate not with little fellows failing under the opposition of their powerful rivals, but from the powerful concerns which are annoyed by the competition of unscrupulous small fry.

Business—or a part of it—used to foam with wrath at the mention of conservation, but I recall that in the days of Roosevelt's great fights for that principle, it was charged that many business interests were behind it—among them being the barbed-wire people, who got huge orders whenever forest sections were withdrawn from entry. And to-day, while one element in business denounces the proposals for government operation of Muscle Shoals, still others are equally industriously campaigning for the quick generation of power there

—because they require it—and others are campaigning for the manufacture of fertilizer there—not because they require fertilizer, but because they fear that the use of Muscle Shoals for the generation of power might develop a great industrial section in that neighborhood to compete with other industrial sections not so fortunately situated.

Thus we see business assailing the government for interfering in its affairs while all the time it is organized, mobilized, and formed in battle array to compel law makers to interfere more. Instead of being denounced, it seems to me that the legislators should be commended for their forbearance and for the obstinacy with which they resist these incessant importunities to pass more laws.

III

The slogan which invites the government to remain out of business is followed quite naturally by a second slogan, a corollary of the first, to this effect: *Let Business Rule Itself.*

This is one of those fair-sounding but ambitious phrases which may mean very much or very little. It may be innocent enough provided we can agree on its intent. But when we say business should be left to rule itself we must be quite certain what we mean by business. That term may refer to a single industrial or commercial enterprise or it may be stretched to comprehend the whole continent of industry and trade. If this little war-cry is devised for no deadlier purpose than to demand self-rule for the individual factory or store, then we need not quarrel with it, for it means nothing. One thing is certain: no one intends to permit the individual business man to rule himself as independently as in the old days of free competition. Let no one suppose that those who want business to rule itself have any notion of letting the individual business man go scot-free of regulation. They wish him to be supplied with plenty of discipline. They propose, however, that this regulation shall come not from the government but from business itself.

Is it proposed, then, that the business men of the country shall be regarded as an autonomous block in our society and that they shall be permitted to set up a machine for their own government? If this is what is meant, does it not look very much like a proposal to erect within the state a lesser state—if not a greater one? Is it not like saying to the government in so many words: You may regulate the relations of the citizens as citizens, but not in their character of business men? You may fool around with the armies and navies. We shall be delighted to have you manage our fire departments, our schools, and police. But the world of business—that is another and a separate domain over which we do not propose, if we can help it, to let you exercise any dominion. Of course the protagonists of this self-governing business confraternity will disavow this extreme view. And yet I am not so sure that this is not the direction in which we are traveling. We are entering an era of industrial regulation more minute and uncompromising than anything we have ever known. We may not like it, but apparently business does. Indeed, business is the leader in the movement. Its chief concern is not to abate regulation but to direct it. It wants the government to stay out of the picture in order that the regulation may be the more complete. And how does it propose to carry out this program?

The instrument of rule now in favor is the trade association. All trades are organized into such groups. It is simple justice to say that these associations have performed some useful services. They have done excellent work in the field of industrial research. They have made some contributions toward the development of greater trade decency. But as instruments of regulation they are being constantly faced with their own inadequacy and helplessness.

They are harassed by the unwillingness of those rebellious and adventurous

spirits who refuse to accept their rule. They are forever running into the disturbing fact that while a trade may, after a fashion, "rule itself," it cannot rule some other trade which is in collision with it. A motorist may rule his own car but he cannot hope to make the road safe unless the other fellow is included in the rules. It is this very weakness which sends trade associations to Congress and the legislatures every year with appeals to the government to join them in some program of regulation.

But the practice of regulating others is habit forming. It is a mania. The man who regulates a little to-day will want to regulate a little more to-morrow. As soon as men find themselves in a game they begin to invent rules for that game, and the more they play the more extensive and complicated the rules become. At first they depend upon a certain spiritual pressure operating through the law of honor to support the rules. But very soon they seek more effective means of getting the rules obeyed. This involves a kind of force. And trade associations have already played with the idea of force. They have already employed very powerful economic weapons as violent and as unintelligent as the boycott and sabotage. Altogether, it seems to me, we are in danger of taking a very serious step backward. Indeed, it seems fairly clear that we are already fairly launched upon a journey back toward guild government.

The resemblance of our modern trade associations to the old craft and merchant guilds which flourished after the collapse of the feudal system is most interesting. Those ancient guilds started out with a good deal of the same kind of apology as our trade associations. They bravely announced that they wanted to improve the ethics of trade—to eliminate dishonest business practices. Then they raised the cry of "less government in business" and actually convinced their local authorities that it would be better all around if business were permitted to "rule itself." But they couldn't rule effectively while the laws against monopoly were enforced, and so the medieval equivalent of the Sherman law was relaxed and the guilds took on the character of monopolies. But the guilds soon found that even under these circumstances they could not rule effectively without the government as an ally. So in the end they took over the government; and deep traces of their rule can still be found all over England and the continent.

The matter is a practical one for us. Regulation there will be, whether we like it or not. The business highway is too crowded. Traffic is impossible without some kind of active supervision. We have got to decide what kind of regulation we want—in whose interest regulation is to be conceived—in the interest of business or of the public at large. If it is to be in the interest of business, the trade association may be depended upon to see that side of it. But surely it is no very serious criticism of the trade associations to say that they may not so certainly see the public's side. The abuses which the man in the trade wants eliminated are those which interfere with profits. He wants ruinous price-cutting done away with. He wants over-production restrained. He wants competition brought under some kind of control. He wants the financially and mechanically responsible dealer protected from the irresponsible trader who makes extravagant concessions to get business. With every good motive on his side, but still for business reasons, he wants the activities of the dishonest trader circumscribed because of the bad odor in which he envelops all. But he wants, also, to have his own trade secured against the competition of some other trade which crosses his field—and this often without much regard to the rights of that other trade or the interests of the public. Carrying out all these purposes in his trade association, with his eye upon his own interests, it is quite possible that he will be not so much interested in abuses which affect the

public more than they do him. Indeed, he may actually create such abuses as a part of the machinery of serving his own business purposes. And if the public abdicates as the protector of its own rights, what will be the final social result? The answer is to be found in part at least in the experience of one trade group which was permitted unmolested for a long time to set up a system of self-government more extensive than any trade is likely to achieve again for some time.

In the period following the War the building trades were able to establish a machine for self-government that seemed complete. Contractors and material men on one hand were formed into special trade guilds and united in a central federation. The workers on the other hand were similarly organized, first into unions and then into a central trades council. Everybody was organized save the masses of home builders and home seekers. Prices were regulated, production controlled, territory parcelled out, business distributed, rivalries abolished, competition destroyed under a ruthless rule that admitted of no invasions. The man who was willing to work under this system was allowed to have his share of the spoils. The man who wouldn't was crushed. These gentlemen perfected this system while the richest city in the world actually needed houses and found itself powerless with all its wealth to procure them. The result was an almost complete paralysis of the building industry; and the serious thing about it was that the building business in its appalling stupidity seemed to be quite satisfied with the situation. There was no one in that experiment in self-rule for business who seemed to care in the least about the public interest until the government stepped in and resumed control of affairs in the interest of all. In the end the interest of all proved to be the interest of the building business itself, for that stupid visionless self-rule had paralyzed the industry, whereas afterwards when the government freed it, we entered upon an era of building under which everybody prospered.

IV

The regulation of business, in our complex social order, is the regulation of life. I confess to a dislike for regulation. But if life is to be regulated I should like to have a voice in the business. I do not want to leave the regulation of business to the business men any more than I want to leave the regulation of traffic to the motorists when there are so many other interests on the highway.

Now since we must have slogans and shibboleths I want to propose one for our business friends. They are fond of saying that there should be more business men in the administration of government. I heartily concur with them. The government is a vast business machine spending more than three and a half billions yearly, and good business men ought to be charged with the administration of that great fund. What the business man overlooks, however, is that if the government has a business side, business just as surely has a human and social side. Business to-day is no longer a small affair involving the relations of individuals. It is a vast affair involving the relations of great groups. It is full of human problems as well as financial, mechanical, and economic problems. And if good business brains are needed to cope with the purely commercial problems, good statesmen are no less wanted to understand the troublesome and pressing human problems.

I, therefore, respectfully submit to the slogan makers this germ idea, from which, I am sure, they will be able to fashion a euphonious and forceful phrase:

Less business interference in government and more statesmanship in business.

I MEET HENRY JAMES

BY MURIEL DRAPER

I HAD wanted to meet Henry James since the day when, as a small child, I sat unnoticed in a room listening to a great woman read aloud to my mother. The book from which she read was *What Maisie Knew* (didn't I say I was unnoticed?), and after a particularly dazzling passage she paused. My mother looked up from her sewing and exclaimed, "How does he manage to bring about such a thing?" And the great woman, whose name was Elizabeth Cummings, answered, "He doesn't manage, my dear Susan; he is a genius." The functionings of genius presented a problem beyond my power to solve, but the effect the word had on me was magical. I rose from the corner where I had been sitting in guilty quiet and asked, "Is he alive?" Disturbed by my presence, Elizabeth Cummings put the book down; alarmed by my voice, my mother looked up and said, "Yes." After a nervous pause I was sent from the room on some needless errand, bearing within me a firm resolve, which was that if there was one genius still alive (at that age one always thinks of them as dead—indeed, it is a delusion from which many of us never recover) I must somehow manage to see him.

Years passed and I saw him. Though by that time perfectly aware that still other geniuses were alive, I could never quite dissociate him in my mind from the reverent amazement I had felt upon first hearing that a genius lived in the same world with myself. Our meeting took place in the London drawing-room of Mrs. Napier, the delightful Mrs. Napier to whom as the "wittiest woman in India" Rudyard Kipling dedicated his *Plain Tales from the Hills*. She was also one of the kindest as well as one of the wittiest women in England and, having promised me an opportunity of fulfilling my resolve, summoned me to tea on an afternoon in 1912 when Henry James was there. I flew across London, rushed up the stairs of her house, and into her drawing-room. It was filled with people, but to me there was only one person in it. He stood, a solid squared ashlar of wisdom, with a magnificently domed head atop, Mrs. Napier by his side. I walked up to him as bravely as I could, and we met.

I told him how it had come about that he had entered my childhood as a uniquely living genius. He listened, with a burdened smile on his full lips, he who had had to hear so much, and then it started. With a laboring that began stirring in the soles of his feet and worked up with gargantuan travail through his knees and weighty abdomen to his heaving breast and strangled column of a throat, hoisted up by eyebrows raised high over the most steadily watching eyes I have ever looked into, he spoke. Having imaginatively participated in every effort his body had made, I was exhausted by the time the words were finally born, but had awaited them too long not to rally my attention when I heard them. They were about like this:

"My dear, if I may call you so, my dear, my even now—if I may yet further without permission so invade your, to be sure, passing years—child, my dear child. How right and yet how perfectly

—if perfection can so enter—how perfectly wrong they both were, *you* were, all of you were."

I sat down. He sat beside me, and in a kind of mutual agony, we continued. I was later to discover that there was a way of communicating with him which avoided all this amazing difficulty, which allowed the rich vein of his knowledge of human beings and events to flow unchecked, and which made listening to him and talking with him one of the rare values of my life; but this first time was agony. Again and again in that memorable conversation he would raise those cornices of eyebrows in an effort to build under them the astounding structure of words that so decorate his written page, and again and again would fail to find them. He seemed to listen for them with his own ear as eagerly as I with mine and even kept his eye alert for the possible shape of one that might make its apparition by happy accident. Rejecting any less felicitous expression of his thought than one that would perfectly convey it, he would throw one phrase after the other away on its tremendous journey up from the soles of his feet. A patient "er-er-er" was the only sign that another had fallen by the wayside. Once, with temerity, I offered him one, almost beseeching him to take it as agreed counterfeit until such time as real gold would be passed over the counter and this soul-racking barter cease. But no, with the dear heavy smile leaving his lips to rest for a moment somewhere under his eyes, he cast it aside. So it went. The weight of his thought, the penetrating justice of his wit, and the impact of his whole being were such that I would gladly have suffered the pain of its articulation through years of silence, had they not seemed to me also, "to be sure, passing years."

We spoke of America a little tentatively, a little anxiously, and very tenderly. We spoke of families. He heard there was a son. He wanted to know him. He spoke of Ruth Draper and her talent, saying her work was a "small Persian carpet of inimitably perfect design" upon which and within the confines of which she should stand, never overstepping the borders. This was evoked by my telling him that Paderewski had said she should "develop it, make it bigger, extend it into the theater, increase it." How illuminating the comparison of those two opinions. He spoke too of music and asked to come one night to my house in Edith Grove, and listen. And then, as I pulled myself up and away from his side, fascinated, exhausted, and adoring, his eyes traveled up from under the corniced eyebrows and saw my hat. It was a small white-satin affair, with a cluster of tiny white love birds perched at the front. He gasped with horror, pointed his finger, and said with utter kindness, "My child" (it came easier this time), "my very dear child—the cruelty—ah! the cruelty of your hat! That once living, indeed yes, loving creatures should have been so cruelly separated by death to become so unhappily and yet ah! how becomingly united on your hat."

I had met Henry James!

Soon after this he came to lunch. Crossing the threshold of Edith Grove, he questioned me concerning our tenure of the house. How long a lease did we have? How long should we be there? I told him it was a twenty-one year lease, and he sighed ponderously, saying, "Long enough to see me out, my child, long enough to see me out. Stay me out, I beg—stay me out." He had asked to be quite alone with us, and so Paul Draper and I sat one on either side of him and listened. After lunch Henry James and I went down to the studio. He asked to see my son and that young person was sent for. The Irish Angel, known to mortals as his nurse, brought him. He was only a little over three years old, and a few days before had been found asleep with a copy of Henry James's book, *Letters of a Son and Brother*, under his pillow, his hand slipped in at a page

upon which a photograph of Henry and his brother William standing close to their father's knee was reproduced. The tale of this incident had moved Henry James, and when my son came into the room he fastened his accurately wise eye upon him. The Irish Angel had brushed his hair until it shone, and dressed him in his "bestest" afternoon raiment, which consisted of long linen trousers and suspenders, all cut out of one piece, fastened to a frilled white shirt at the shoulders by a huge pearl button. The devouring James focussed his gaze on that button and held it there as the child crossed the vast room. Spontaneously glad to see this grown-up, who in his youth had leaned so trustingly at his father's knee, my son had entered the room on the run; but faced with the arresting force of H. J.'s gaze, his footsteps faltered and his pace slackened, so that by the time he came to within three feet of him, he stopped short and remained motionless as that great man began to address him:

"Ah! my boy. So here you come, faithfully—as it were, into view—with buttons, yes, *buttons*," here he paused while the yeast that would eventually give rise to the ultimate word began to ferment in the soles of his feet. As it reached his knees he repeated, "Buttons, that are, er—that are—er—er . . ." By this time the poor child was intimidated by the intensity of face and tone and started to back away, but Henry James began a circular movement in air with the forefinger of his right hand and continued—"buttons that have been—er—" and then, in a shout of triumph—"*Jettê'd*, as it were, yes, *jettê'd*"—his voice quieting down as the word emerged, "*jettê'd* so rightly, so needfully, just *there*, my child," pointing in the direction of his small shoulder. But my child heard him not. At the first burst of "*jettê'd*" he had fled terrified from the room, the discovery of which brought forth from Henry James the mournful reflection, "Would I had remained a photograph!"

To be called to the telephone by Henry James was an experience in itself. The first time it happened, I, all unaware, took up the receiver eagerly, and said, "Yes—this is Muriel."

A voice that began to twist and turn on the other end of the wire, finally spoke.

"Would you be—er—or rather, my dear,—er—my very dear, if I may call you so,—child, would you, not by—er—er—arrangement, but would you—more—er—truthfully speaking—be—er—er *naturally* at home—this afternoon?"

By that time I was not naturally anything at all, and could only gasp, "Yes, always, any time—yes, yes, this afternoon at five, I will unnaturally or not, be here—yes," and hang up the receiver.

It was during his first visit that I learned to talk with him and listen to him, by withdrawing the weight of my attention from his actual words and the anguished facial contortions that accompanied them, and fastening it on the stream of thought itself. I even diverted my eyes from that part of his face from which the phrases finally emerged, namely his mouth, and directed them to a more peaceful spot between his eyes, which I imagined to be the source of thought. It proved helpful. Evidently released from some bondage which the eye and ear of a listener imposed upon him, he seemed to feel more free. My effort to ignore the words and extract the meaning by a sense of weight, inflection, and rhythm which emanated from him removed the burden he must have felt at keeping me—anyone—waiting so long, and gradually the full current of his thought was flowing steadily, pauses and hesitations becoming accents rather than impediments. It proved an excellent *modus operandi* from then on, and only at those times when he had an audience of more than one person did the old difficulties return.

A few nights after this lunch, Thibaut, Casals, Rubinstein, Kochansky, and Sczymanowski were to be the nucleus of an evening at Edith Grove, so I sent a

line to Henry James informing him of this and begging him to join us. He arrived early and sledged down the stairs into the room with that extraordinary density of movement that was characteristic of him. He did not give the impression of putting one foot before the other in order to carry his torso and its appendages into the room. He came in all at once. Head, shoulders, arms, body, legs arrived at the same time, inexorably displacing space and leaving an almost visible vacancy in his wake. Solid purposeful wholeness impelled him. All of him was there, nothing left behind. He sat quietly on the sofa beside me and awaited silently the first notes of the Brahms B Major piano trio which was to begin the evening's program. As the music progressed and the incomparable tone of Casals' cello was heard in the short solo passage of the first movement, his solemnly searching eyes fastened on Casals' face, and he seemed to listen by seeing. When Thibaut began the brilliant passage for violin in the second movement, his eyes left Casals' as if he had drunk him all in through his organs of sight—music, hands, bowing, and all—and centered on Thibaut, whom he watched with meticulous care during the whole second movement. During the last, when Arthur Rubinstein was burning the music out of the piano with an accumulating speed that left even those great artists somewhat breathless as he rushed them up to the high climax of the trio, H. J. turned the attention of his listening eyes toward him and kept it there until the performance came to a close. Only then did he begin to question me and greet one or two of the artists as they came up. His need for exhaustive analysis of each one separately made it difficult for him to take them in collectively, and I left him talking tortuous French to Thibaut. Casals was clamoring for the Schubert octette which was his favorite, as the Mendelssohn was Thibaut's. He said "one drank fresh milk" in listening to it, and could he please hear it through instead of playing it. As soon as enough artists had arrived to make up the necessary parts, it began, Thibaut and Bauer playing first violin (yes, Bauer, whose great pleasure it occasionally was, when circumstances allowed, to play second violin in a familiar work), Pierre Monteux and Harold Bauer's sister Gertrude playing viola, Rubio and May Mukle playing the two cellos, and the faithful Watson and a friend of his playing double bass.

Casals sat on one side of me smoking a huge cigar, which was one of his few indulgences, and Henry James on the other, watching, absorbing, recording every gesture and expression of each man or woman in the room, and each object or article of furniture in relation to them. His appreciation was for and in terms of images. No sounds passed unsifted through that battery of image-attention he employed so skillfully. He seemed to be possessed of an inner secret delight. It was as if he were playing a powerful game of the intellect, a game the rules of which he had himself invented, the honors of which were inalienably his. It appeared to absorb, amuse, and frighten him a little. Fright could have been lessened only at the cost of diminished absorption and amusement, a price he would not pay. He took in the fragile, minute, and blond delicacy of Mme. Thibaut as she sat in timorous sprightliness in an enveloping armchair of exaggerated dimensions, under a vase of heavily blossoming, formally petalled pink and white camellias, gleamily bending through glossy dark green leaves. He did not neglect Mme. Suggia, the gifted cello-playing friend of Pablo Casals, who sat in swarthy gold white and black of skin and hair and dress, on a small upright Chinese Chippendale chair in the spectral shadow of paling almond flowers. He saw the sensitive aloof protection which Carol Sczymanowski threw about himself and the life-defying speed with which Arthur Rubinstein managed to stand still. To all this he gave the steady orderliness of his ob-

servation. Toward the end of the octette Montague Vert Chester, in a new pair of white gloves, came into the room. As was the unvarying custom at Edith Grove, he crept into the nearest seat he could find without even a whisper of greeting, and listened with the rest. It happened to be a seat on the other side of James, and when the music was over, I presented him. "Chester, this is Mr. James." Chester, with a scant nod, for he had no social grace, said, "Good evening, Mr. James" and began to talk across him to me. Knowing that Chester admired his works with an enthusiasm that he rarely accorded anything other than music, my son, and pink food, I added, "Mr. Henry James, Chester." He bounded up from his seat and shouted with excitement.

"What, not *the* Mr. James? Not the great Henry James?" offering his white-gloved hand in clumsy respect, eyes popping from his head.

From under benevolent eyebrows *the* Mr. James looked up and said soothingly, "Take it gently, my good man, take it gently."

Chester sat down.

In a corner formed by three folds of the Kien-Lung screen, lighted by a Burmese chandelier of carved golden flowers and leaves that trailed downward over her head, I had placed a Chinese stone statue of the Goddess of Charity. Her right arm held in calm closeness to her side under gracious folds of modest raiment, her left hand outstretched to offer a basket filled with fruits of human kindness, eyes drooping to veil from her sight the need of those who took, she stood forever in impassioned serenity. It was to Henry James a source of unending wonder. Standing before it the first time, he turned to me and chanted, "Ah! my child, what a lesson to the artists of to-day on where to begin and to the women of to-day on where to leave off!"

One night at the house of the painter, John Sargent, James discussed with me the "Portrait of Mlle. X," which then adorned one wall of the big room in which we stood. He gave a spirited account of the infuriated mother of "Mlle. X" who had returned the portrait not exactly post-haste, but as fast as so large a canvas could be returned, with a note in which she expressed her outrage that so great an artist should have made a "*portrait lubrique de ma fille.*" James was explaining that "the dress you see, cut a little perhaps generously and held by such slender promises of modesty across her shoulders" (she should have had buttons, *jetté'd*, as it were, so rightly, on those shoulders!) was upsetting to the good lady, her mother, when he observed that my own frock was held in place by nothing more than two strands of blue pearls, one on each shoulder. In extreme agitation lest I should pursue the analogy, he launched into the most elaborate discussion and comparison of clothes then and "now," plunging farther and farther in his desire to free my mind of any disapproving conclusion. His antics were endearingly elaborate, but his entanglement became so complex that I finally extricated him by saying, "I think it must have been the face she objected to." His courtesy, kindness, and humor were high lights that played on the surface of his profound wisdom, intellectual clarity, and micrometric interest in the conflicts and consummations which men and women bring about by living in the same world.

When Sargent was painting Henry James's portrait in 1913, he suggested my coming to the studio to engage H. J. in conversation, that his sitter might not be irked by such long hours of silence, only interrupted by those laconic phrases with which all portrait painters endeavor to make the time pass in the conviction that it constitutes a conversation. Poor dears, they can't be expected to do two things at once, but, oh! the dreariness of some of that chat. Only a dentist can surpass it! Be that as it may, Sargent had no sooner made the suggestion than he threw up his

hands in despair and said, "No! If he talks the contortions of his face will be such that no painting will be possible at all! On the other hand, if he doesn't he will fall asleep in his chair murmuring 'adumbrations, adumbrations.' What shall I do?" What he did is there, in the National Gallery, London, for all to see. It is one of his finest works and, in spite of the damage done it by frenzied ladies in an ill-advised moment (the canvas was slashed clear across from corner to corner as a protest by "militant suffragettes," militant, but how unsoldierly!)—a damage which has been restored with such cunning as to render it invisible, it remains a serious attempt to record on canvas the compelling organic logic of one man's thought.

So I could go on for pages, but as this is not to be a book on Henry James, I offer this mere handful of impressions caught at random from the air he so invaded. I will add that when fate determined that I should leave London during 1915, I saw him one long last time. Invalided, sickened with a grief and distress that needs no retelling, he heard my news and after an unforgettable silence, said:

"So my child, my very dear child, you are not staying me out. You are returning to that America we—" There his pause was not for lack of words, but the more clearly to convey the unspoken. And then—"ah . . . well—perhaps one day I may do some faint far justice to all this," with a wave of the arm that encircled the room and everything that had ever been seen, spoken or heard in it, "to all this you have given me—to all this," and he patted my hand. He did not say good-by, but sledged slowly, sadly, wisely out, the domed head disappearing like a silvered sun at the top of the stairs. I never saw him again.

THE DEATHLESS FOLK

BY MARY BRENT WHITESIDE

I SAW a fairy on a fluttering leaf,
When all the rest were still;
And where a single grassblade shook,
A goblin sat beside a brook—
Shapes cloudy as forgotten grief,
And dim as shadows on a distant hill.

You hold that fairies went the way of death
When brain ruled out the heart?
They fled with wild, affrighted looks
From learned theses out of books,
To yield a faint, expiring breath
In fading pigments of anemic art.

O faithless lover! These are hardier folk!
Bereft of flowers and trees,
Hear now their wings and laughter go
By airplane and the radio!
The vassals of Titania spoke
When human voices spanned the seas.

THE GREAT SPORTS MYTH

BY JOHN R. TUNIS

I HAVE an English friend who some thirty years ago was the champion of a little golf club situated on the Sussex Downs between Hove and Worthing. He went out as a subaltern in the Boer War and lost his left arm there, incapacitating himself for further golf. With zeal he turned to tennis, developed a good game, and in a few years was one of the best players in the local club. When the Great War came somehow he wangled a commission for himself and, leading a battalion into action on the Somme, lost his right leg. My last meeting with him was during the winter of 1927, at a British Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club on the French Riviera. He had learned croquet and was by then a low handicap player, pressing the club champion closely.

That man, I submit, is a sportsman. He knows the thrill of real sport, of playing not for championships, for titles, for cash, for publicity, or for applause, but simply for the love of the game. Everyone knows this thrill who has ever felt a golf ball soar from his club and seen it bound down the middle of the course two hundred and fifty yards ahead; who has finished a long, tense rally with a passing shot that cuts the sidelines and leaves a helpless adversary shaking his head in admiration at the net; who has followed two Airedales jumping and leaping through the Connecticut uplands on a mellow afternoon in the fall. A long cross-country walk with a dog, three close sets of tennis, a foursome on a day when the course is uncrowded and the sun shines high above—this is sport, real sport, the expression of the sporting spirit at its highest. On these occasions one tastes the full enjoyment of the game; one finds that complete and satisfying relaxation of mind and body which to the work-weary brain is such a perfect solace. In this informal and unorganized sport one discovers not only the game but the player at his best. Umpires? Referees? Officials? The need for them does not exist. Implicitly one trusts one's opponent because one trusts oneself; one never for a moment questions the score at each hole, or whether one's shot did or did not touch the line. One takes it for granted that a sportsman is also a gentleman. All that is best in sport can be found—and what is more, is found—in these friendly encounters upon the golf links and tennis courts of the country.

But of late years a curious fiction appears to have grown up throughout the nation regarding sport. It is doubtless caused by confusing the effects of friendly sport with those of the great highly organized competitions that are held each year from January to December. For this fiction the sporting writers of the big city dailies are very largely responsible; in their altogether human effort to glorify their trade they have preached unceasingly that all the values to be found in informal athletic meetings are present also in these huge organized sporting spectacles. All competitive sport, so they tell us, is health-giving, character-building, brain-making. Its exponents are young heroes possessing the best and none but the best of qualities; they are tempered and steeled by

the white heat of competition, purified and made holy by their devotion to sport. Thanks to these gentry who pursue with such zeal our modern pastimes for the daily press, there has grown up in the public mind an exaggerated and sentimental notion of the moral value of these great competitive spectacles of sport, a fiction which may be termed The Great Sports Myth.

The sports writers regard the whole sporting panorama with an almost religious seriousness. So far as I am aware, Mr. W. O. McGeehan of the New York *Herald-Tribune* is almost the only member of the brotherhood who has dared publicly to question the sanctity of organized competitive athletics; he alone has suggested that the idols of the sporting world may be equipped with feet of clay. For the rest, everyone embroiders the fiction of The Great Sports Myth. When we are asked to rally to the defense of the Davis Cup before it is too late the appeal is as solemn as if our national life were in the balance. The amount of space given to the different football systems of the colleges by the press, the thousands of miles traveled by sporting reporters, those literary camp-followers of the game, are proof enough of the hold that The Great Sports Myth has upon us. On the evening before the Harvard-Yale contests at Cambridge, even as sedate a newspaper as the Boston *Evening Transcript* devotes no less than four pages to the conflict; special writers, sporting writers, feature writers, editors, and their more humble assistants treating it as earnestly and sententiously as the forecasts of a Presidential election upon Election Eve.

The manner in which the American public is fostered and fed from one season to another by The Great Sports Myth is not only amazing, it is depressing for anyone who gets an opportunity to peek behind the scenes. The sporting heroes of the nation are our gods. From day to day, from month to month, from year to year we are deluged with a torrent of words about these sporting Sir Galahads: the amateur football players of the colleges, the professional baseball players of the big leagues, the "shamateur" tennis and golf players who often take a hand in the exalting of their own personalities through the medium of the press. In the winter months we are treated to columns of "dope" about these supermen, of chatter and gossip about their every movement. In early spring the star of sport turns eastward; for six weeks in May and June we are regaled via the Atlantic cables with the feats of Mr. Tilden, Mr. Hagen, Miss Wills, or Mrs. Mallory in the French and British golf and tennis championships. By July the travelers are back once more in their native haunts, not infrequently with hard words about conditions and competitors across the sea; and then the deluge of sporting bunk begins in earnest. The channel swimmers are busy explaining why channels are so broad and trainers so thick. In August come the big aquatic events, the yachting regattas, the motor-boat races for the Golf Cup; in early September, the Davis Cup matches. Almost every fall we have a major prize fight. October brings colds, coal bills, and the World's Series with its front-page covortings of Home-run Kings and Strike-out Emperors. And the sporting year draws to an end in late November when the nation goes completely daft over intercollegiate football. Except for the imposing lists of All-America teams composed by young gentlemen who have perhaps seen in action three hundred of the thirty thousand football players of the country, we have a rest in December. We need it, too!

Man has always, I suppose, been a hero worshipper. Doubtless he always will be. We Americans do not seem to find religious prophets to exalt. We have no Queen Marie; we even lack a Mussolini to raise upon a pedestal. Consequently we turn hopefully to the world of sports. There we find the

material to satisfy our lust for hero worship, there we discover the true gods of the United States. Messrs. Tunney, Dempsey, Ruth, Jones, Hagen, Tilden, Grange—these become the idols of America's masculine population, young and old. And why not? After all, we ask ourselves, are they not athletes? Have they not been cleansed (and so sanctified) in the great white heat of competition upon the links or the gridiron, the court or the diamond? That competitive sport—any kind of competitive sport from prize fighting to squash tennis—makes for nobility of character is the first commandment of the American sporting public. It is, in fact, the foundation of The Great Sports Myth.

II

Yet the plain truth is that highly organized competitive sport is not character building; on the contrary, after a good deal of assistance at various sporting events of all sorts and some competition in them, I am convinced that the reverse is true. It seems to me that far from building character, continuous and excessive participation in competitive sport tends to destroy it. Under the terrific stress of striving for victory, victory, victory, unpleasant traits of all sorts are brought out. The player's worst side is too frequently magnified; his self-control is broken down oftener than it is built up. I know this is heresy. I realize that the opposite is preached at us from every side. (Most fervently, however, by sporting writers, football coaches, "shamateur athletes," or those who have some other direct interest in the furtherance of The Great Sports Myth.) I am aware that the participants in American sport are all supposed to be little short of demigods upon Olympus. Yet if football, for instance, is the noble and character-building game it is popularly considered to be, why, I wonder, is it necessary to station an umpire, a referee, a field judge, a head linesman, and a half a dozen assistants to follow the play at a distance of several yards and to watch zealously every one of the twenty-two contestants in order that no heads and no rules may be broken simultaneously?

At this point I can imagine the raucous shouts of the devoted followers of intercollegiate football and The Great Sports Myth. Football, they will cry, is the most wonderful, the most elevating, the most disciplining sport in existence. It is, in short, the perfect game. Yet occasionally things happen in this perfect game which give pause to the impartial observer. Only a year or so ago the Syracuse-Army game was so rough that a star quarter-back had to be disqualified for the season. To be sure, he was back on the field the next year and was later, I believe, elected captain. But surely the violation of the rules of the game has to be fairly serious to cause a successful football eleven to be disrupted in this manner. An exception? Possibly. But it was not so long ago that two players were separated in a Harvard-Yale game at New Haven only by the combined efforts of the other players and the officials, to be sent from the field with no more opportunities for character-uplifting until the beginning of the hockey season, several weeks later. Nor are the disputes confined entirely to individuals and combatants. Last December, after what the sporting brotherhood of the press called the most successful football season of all time, Columbia refused to speak to New York University, Harvard was still holding aloof from Princeton, and the Navy was in the act of severing diplomatic relations with the Army. In fact, it began to appear as though in the none too distant future no college in the United States would have anything to do in any way with any other college. All on account of football!

Have you ever heard of Fight Week? No? Let me explain. One of the most famous and successful of football coaches instituted Fight Week when he discovered that his charges needed a moral

stimulus to take them through their big game victoriously. Fight Week consisted of five days of practice in the middle of the season when fight was indeed in order. Murder was forbidden —but little else. In this hard, bruising contact of body on body, in the abandonment of mind and soul to the gods of war, came that supreme indifference to place and circumstance which enabled a nineteen-year-old boy to catch a punt or make a tackle before sixty thousand spectators, a play upon which hung perhaps victory or defeat. Such a felicitous idea was Fight Week that it soon became an annual institution—one not looked upon, is it necessary to say, with any great feeling of delight by the unhappy victims.

Other coaches discovered that in order to imbue an eleven with the proper fighting spirit a systematic campaign of hate must be indulged in prior to the big game. This is brought about in various ways. Astute members of the professional coaching clan have different methods. Some instil their charges with sentiments of hatred toward their enemies by a talk before the eleven goes out upon the field. As the listeners will inform you, these talks closely resemble the talks given by British sergeant-majors scattered through our army training camps during the war to teach the use and practice of the bayonet. Other coaches say little to their charges, preferring to create the hate atmosphere more subtly. They may perhaps read a slurring remark made by some graduate of the opposing college; they will possibly show the team a copy of the rival university's comic magazine containing a dirty dig or two. Such things, they hint, are as an insult to one's mother, and they bid the eleven to go forth to battle to wipe out the insult as best they can. Many and devious are the ways in which the idea is put across. All of this, needless to say, is kept carefully from the newspapers and the devoted disciples of The Great Sports Myth.

Doesn't anyone rebel? Yes, occasionally. Mr. George Owen of Boston, Harvard's great half-back of post-war years, actually had the temerity to protest in a magazine article some time after his graduation. College football, he said in effect, had become drudgery. He confessed that the average player was heartily happy when, win or lose, the final evening of the season had arrived. And what was the result of his confession? It was very much as if a soldier had returned to this country in 1918 and in the midst of all the recruiting propaganda had declared that war was not all it was cracked up to be. Mr. Owen was looked upon as a traitor to The Great Sports Myth. He was castigated in the press the country over, he was even attacked from the platform of the Harvard Union by—guess whom? Right the first time. By a football coach. And when last fall the *Yale Daily News* timorously suggested that an unpaid coach be placed in charge of the football team, the proposal was greeted with guffaws. How amusing! Give football back to the boys? What a ridiculous idea!

"*Nerve Tensed Stalwarts Keyed up for Supreme Effort of Season.*" So ran the headline of a pre-game football story in a New York daily last fall. Anyone who has seen a big athletic contest at close range will testify to the degree to which the nerves of the aforesaid stalwarts are tensed. Instead of being in sound mental and physical condition when they go out on the links, the gridiron, the court, or the river, our gods are actually in a state of nerves which often leads them to do things otherwise incomprehensible. The plain truth is that the intensive strain of modern competition, and the glare of publicity created by the press, the movies, and the radio, wear down and destroy the nervous tissue of the average competitor. How else can one explain the petulant outburst, the no less petulant actions of Mr. Walter Hagen on his return from his trip to England when he failed to win their golfing title several years ago? Or the

performances of Mr. Tilden upon the court? Off the court, as his friends will willingly testify, Mr. Tilden is a charming and urbane gentleman. Once he gets into combat, however, he becomes with his zest for victory—a zest that every champion must have or go under in competitive sport—something totally unlike his normal self. He will turn and glare at any linesman who dares give a decision against his belief; before the thousands in the stands he will demand the removal of the offender; he will request lets at crucial moments; object when new balls are thrown out—in short, do things he would never think of doing were he not so intensely concentrated on winning.

Nor would it be just to Mr. Tilden to single him out for special blame. If you saw the Davis Cup Challenge Round of 1914 you may remember the childish performance of the man who is by many considered as the greatest tennis player of all time, Mr. Norman Everard Brookes of Australia. The first set of his match against McLoughlin the American was a long one, and captured by the latter only in the thirty-second game. The enthusiasm of the galleries was vociferous, spontaneous, and natural, and Mr. Brookes promptly clapped his hands to his ears and held them there as long as the cheering lasted. Anyone who has spent a winter in the south of France during the reign of Mademoiselle Suzanne Lenglen will testify to her strenuous efforts to avoid defeat by remaining out of tournaments in which she seemed likely to be beaten. In 1926, during the visit of Miss Helen Wills to the Riviera, her attempts to avoid the American player were so amusing that a famous Parisian daily ran an article entitled: "*Tennis ou Cache-Cache?*" (Tennis or Hide and Seek?). These, mind you, are not the actions of youngsters new to sport; they are the actions of champions and super-champions. Concentrating as they must to win, they hardly know what they are doing or saying. They become self-hypnotized for the time being. Follow them round the sport circle from week to week and from year to year as I have done and you will, I am sure, lose any illusions about the uplifting nature of competitive sport to-day.

The popular belief is that sport teaches self-control, that it shows us how to accept not only victory but defeat with a graceful smile and a sincere one. If you believe in The Great Sports Myth, I wish that you might visit the locker rooms and dressing quarters of our clubhouses and athletic buildings and mingle with the champions before and after their contests.

"He beat the gun, that's why he copped."

"I was interfered with in the last quarter on that forward pass or I'd have scored a touchdown."

"I'll beat that big stiff or burst a blood vessel."

"The decision in the third set cost me the match—sure the ball was on the line, I saw it."

"This man Smith has always been against us; we'll have to see he doesn't get a chance to referee at any of the varsity games again."

These—with embellishments unprintable—are the sort of things you hear from the inside at every big sporting event. You think, perhaps, that this is an exaggeration. Get someone who has umpired a contest between Mr. Richards and Mr. Tilden to tell you how they addressed each other as they shook hands across the net after a tense five-set battle. It is no accident that Mr. Robert T. Jones is almost the only champion in any branch of sport who is genuinely popular with those who play against him and, therefore, see him under the stress of modern competition. The strain is too great for most men at the top of the heap.

Moreover, by thus elevating our athletic heroes to the peaks of prominence, by prying into their private lives, by following them incessantly in the pages of the daily press, by demanding of them victories and yet more victories, we

force them inevitably to lose all sense of proportion—if, indeed, they ever had any. For it seems to me a debatable question whether anyone with a sense of proportion—or a sense of humor, which comes to much the same thing—could lose himself in this sporting miasma far enough to become a champion. Judging by their remarks in public, one is forced to conclude that many, if not all, our sporting gods are muscle-bound between the ears.

III

Another tenet of The Great Sports Myth is the time-worn belief that international competition in sport strengthens the bond between nations and between individuals. It usually does nothing of the sort. Only those who have taken part in international competitive sport of one kind or another know this to be a fact. Yet surely it stands to reason that if two football players from two of the oldest and largest colleges in the United States will indulge in fisticuffs before eighty thousand spectators in their big test of the season, there is little enough chance for a general kissing match at an international sporting reunion like the Olympic Games. In reality, the Olympic Games breed contention.

When, as these games approach, I hear the usual mouthings about the great good they do to international relations, I am minded of a small paragraph from the *Paris Auto*, the great sporting daily of France. Translated exactly, it reads:

"M. Moneton, the referee of the match between the Racing Club de Calais and the Stade Roubaisienne, thanks the members of the Racing Club de Calais team for saving his life directly after the match."

That an Olympic contest ends in a free fight as this encounter must have done is untrue; that they usually generate hard feeling is none the less a fact. Certainly it has been so within my knowledge of Olympic Games, which began with those of 1908 when the cry of foul was raised in the eight-hundred-meter run between Carpenter and Halswelle. In the last Olympics at Paris, in 1924, conditions were so bad that the captain of one American team openly threatened to withdraw his men from the contest. Speaking of the tennis events at Colombes that summer, a New York daily on July 17, 1924, carried the following despatch from its Paris correspondent:

"The discontent is not confined to Americans, but is general among most of the various nations assembled at Colombes. Jean Washer of Belgium, after his match with Francis Hunter yesterday, under a burning sun, with no comfortable spot to retire to in the rest interval, told his friends he would never play another match under such conditions."

The French at Olympic contests dislike the English because of their natural athletic aptitude, the English in turn are jealous of the increasing ability of the French in sport, the Italians and Scandinavians are at swords' points, and everyone unites upon one common ground alone—that of hating the athletes from the United States. For it appears that our supremacy in sport, like our industrial supremacy, brings not popularity but unpopularity. Our sweeping victories on track and field, far from making us the adored and admired favorites of the crowd, have brought things to such a point that one American team at a recent Olympic contest was actually hissed when it appeared in the stadium. Another team from this country was ordered, to protect them from bodily harm, to remain indoors after nightfall. These marvelous Olympic Games which do so much good in promoting international understanding!

Exceptional? Extraordinary? Not at all. When the Irish rugby team played France last winter the crowd got out of hand, broke down the barriers, swarmed on to the field, and rushed for the referee, a former captain of a Scottish

team twenty-five years ago. He managed to escape to the dressing room and, as the mob stood outside howling for his blood, was eventually escorted from the grounds under police protection!

You never hear much about these things? Obviously not. The sporting writers do not dwell upon this aspect of sport; is it not contrary to the precept that all is for the best in the best of all possible sporting worlds?

Some time ago a writer in the *Princeton Alumni Weekly* entitled an article "The Sublimation of War." His argument was to the effect that if all nations were "sport loving and dominated by the true instincts of sport" war would be completely eradicated. This article was widely copied, and Mr. Julian S. Myrick of the United States Lawn Tennis Association thought so highly of it that he had reprints made and forwarded to the secretaries of the various tennis associations throughout the world. The Sublimation of War! We had a taste of it a few months afterward when the break came between Harvard and Princeton in the fall of 1926.

Dignified in front-page headlines by the sonorous title of "*Severance of Athletic Relations*," this episode reflected credit upon neither of the universities nor upon their followers. According to the tenets of The Great Sports Myth, both Princeton and Harvard undergraduates ought to have been lifelong friends and good fellows on the field and in the stands. Such, as the saying goes, was not the case. The trouble began early in 1922, when one after another of the best Harvard players were taken from the gridiron in the Princeton game with various injuries which removed them from the sublimating effect of sport for the rest of the season. Murmurs of rough play were heard from Cambridge; they continued, these murmurs, during the next few years in increased volume as Princeton went on defeating Harvard by overwhelming scores. The climax was reached in the season of 1926, when the day before the game the *Harvard Lampoon* appeared with a disgraceful attack upon Princeton and her supporters. The actual game was a sorry spectacle; hisses and groans rose from both sides of the field, and in their comments during the following week even the most ardent devotees of The Great Sports Myth in the press agreed that such an affair was neither stimulating nor worth continuing. After the game the undergraduates of the two universities regarded one another very much as Germans and Americans regarded one another in 1918. Several days later the actual break came. With all the solemnity of a nation rupturing diplomatic relations with a powerful neighbor, Princeton "broke with Harvard," as the newspapers screamed in headlines from the front pages.

Recriminations, insinuations, rhetorical attacks and counter attacks ensued; the press carried columns and pages of the effect of this break upon the world of sport—and not a soul who commented upon the fracas appeared to see the amusing side of the whole affair. Sport, the healer of relationships between nations, sport, the promoter of good feeling and comradeship, sport that brings forth all that is best in human nature, was producing—what? Gouged noses, broken ankles, bad feeling, cursing and reviling in the sanctity of dressing rooms, coarse accusations and cheap humor in the university publications. If sport cannot do better than this among the representatives of two of the best-known colleges of the country, how can it be expected to unite Gaul and Teuton, Arab and Oriental, black man and white, as it is popularly supposed to do by those who glibly prate of the sublimation of war?

If our highly organized sports taught us as much of mutual understanding, generosity, and forbearance as their advocates claim for them, there might be some excuse for the elevation of sport into a kind of national religion. Yet why is it that the United States, by common acclaim the greatest sporting nation

in the world, is so sensitive to criticism, so open to flattery? What the fetish of competitive sport does most successfully is inculcate in us the desire to win. Not at any cost. Certainly not! There are far too many linesmen, referees, umpires, field judges, timers, and minor officials to permit of anything of the sort. But have you ever observed that our gods are all winners? It is Tunney, Hagen, Jones, Ruth, Miss Wills; not Mrs. Mallory, Dempsey, Johnston, or Ouimet who are worshipped and glorified. It is the champion and not the way in which the championship is won or lost that attracts the plaudits of the mob whose creed is The Great Sports Myth. The King can do no wrong. And the King *pro tem* is always the man who sits at the top of the pile.

IV

The final commandment of The Great Sports Myth is that sport must be taken not smilingly, laughingly, as a pleasure; but discreetly, advisedly, soberly, with all the seriousness at one's command. Competitive sport is not regarded as a source of enjoyment and relaxation, as Mr. George Owen pointed out. It is a task, a duty, a bond which must be worn with a firm but courageous heart. Levity is not the vein in which our great athletic encounters are to be treated. To imply that they are not the all-important business of life is to break one of the principal canons of The Great Sports Myth.

Instance, the famous Caldwell case. Mr. Caldwell was a football player who had played—although briefly—on the Freshman team at Brown University. He then transferred to Yale University where he played on the Yale Freshman eleven, and two years on the Yale Varsity; this made four years of competitive football, which at present—and not unjustly either—is deemed sufficient for the modern undergraduate. For some reason his season at Brown was unknown and he kept on playing most of his fifth season at New Haven. Three days before the Yale-Princeton game his football services at Brown were brought to light, and he was quite properly declared ineligible by the authorities at Yale. The wave of indignation with which this eminently fitting act was received by the devotees of The Great Sports Myth throughout the nation, and the amount of hysterical and maudlin comment that the affair produced was amazing. Instead of being treated as a young man who had either knowingly or unknowingly transgressed a rule, Mr. Caldwell, thanks to The Great Sports Myth, was treated as the unfortunate victim of a cruel freak of chance. He became, overnight, the martyr of American sport. One Yale graduate of twenty years' standing wrote a letter to a large New York daily which in spite of its extraordinary phraseology expresses perfectly the attitude of the public at the time. He said:

> For Caldwell the man I sing; not Caldwell the player of games. Shall this man be doomed that the technical gods be fed? Yale! Princeton! Harvard! Why destroy this man? Thy glory goes on, but what of him? Has he broken the spirit of the law governing tramp athletes? It seems that technically he has. He has done so unconsciously, while the athletic committee at Yale has done so inadvertently or through oversight. One might not expect that he would know the rule about tramp athletes, but one would expect that the athletic authorities at Yale would be zealous to guard the law they helped frame.
>
> Therefore, Caldwell is not in any way to blame; but the real blame rests upon the Yale athletic authorities. The injury, should he not be allowed to play, falls upon Caldwell, the man. More far reaching than acquiring his "Y," it affects his whole career. Yale! You are responsible for the wrecking of his whole career, if you carry out your present design! . . . All sportsmen . . . are depressed, chagrined, and ashamed to see a man like this defamed. Thy glory cannot stand on such little points as are claimed. It's a man that is called and that's up at the stake. To hell with such rules that down such as him. They never were made to destroy

such fame. Now show that you're greater than the rules and stand first for a man that's a man clean through.

Yale, 1907

Possibly you are somewhat astonished that a letter of this kind could have been written by a mature man, out of college twenty years. Not at all. He was simply a firm believer in the portentous seriousness of sport, a believer in The Great Sports Myth. There were others. A football writer, himself a college man, said of the Caldwell affair: "If Caldwell does not play Saturday the afternoon of 75,000 people will be spoiled and a boy's life will be ruined."

Quite the proper perspective. And listen to the following letter written to the New York *Herald* in 1926, shortly after the freshman crew at Yale had been suspended for cheating in an examination:

The Yale freshman crew of 1926 was very fast, and, it is admitted by experts, would have won its race with Harvard easily. Six of the crew skinned through their examinations and admitted it, and the faculty have ordered them off the crew. . . . Let us propose a remedy—have all examinations of athletes at the end of the season; of rowing and baseball men a few days before the fall term opens, of football men ten days after the last fall match. By this plan the pedagogue is kept from interfering with training and not allowed to keep a crew in a state of suspense or worry. . . . It is not fair to a crew or a nine or eleven to upset their mental equilibrium on the eve of a great event. . . .

This remarkable epistle was signed "An Old Graduate of Yale."

But surely the writers of these letters were joking? Probably they were attempting to be satirical? Not at all. In discussing sports the believer in The Great Sports Myth is always serious, nor can he see any excuse for a boy being forbidden to play because he has transgressed the rules, or for a crew which might win a race being suspended for cheating. In the case of at least one of the two letters quoted above, the writer, on seeing his masterpiece in print, called up the sporting editor and ordered thirty copies of the paper. Not serious? Don't you believe it!

This fervid attitude toward sport is instilled into the American as a boy at school and college. Cheering is showing "spirit." You must support the team. Said a leading sports writer in an Eastern daily recently:

The spirit of Notre Dame in football rises superior to defeat. I saw a letter yesterday which was written by a Notre Dame student to a friend here. Here is an illuminating extract from it. "No doubt the Army victory over N. D. rather surprised you. Well, it did me. The boys must have been way off, or the Army must have been very good. The spirit here was stronger than ever. Monday at 6 A.M. the students got up and went to the station four miles away to meet the players who arrived at 7:17 A.M. The students cheered the players and sang the 'Victory March.' A few of the players had tears on their cheeks. They were a depressed outfit. The crowd snake-danced down Michigan Avenue at 7 A.M., rather early, I'll say. When the outfit reached the school the band met them, also more of the boys, and they cheered, yelled and sang. They also had yells and cheers at noon-time meal, when they met together. That is spirit."

That is spirit! There speaks the true fanatic of this new religion of deadly serious sport.

V

Several years ago a representative of a British university visited this country and made a tour of our colleges to find out what the reasons were for our success in athletics. His report on returning to England would make even the most hardened believers in The Great Sports Myth pause and think. In one college he discovered that the town's butcher had been enrolled as a member of the university because he had exceptional ability as a football player. The Englishman's researches up and down the country must indeed have been limited if he found but one case of this sort. Everywhere, so he says in his report, the stadium was pointed out to him with

more pride than any other building in the university. He was also enlightened about the "jackpot" which wealthy graduates subscribe in their efforts to attract the best possible material in order to turn out winning teams. He described with horror how a great Eastern university spent two hundred and fifty thousand dollars between the first of September and the last of November on a losing football eleven. What, he asked, must a winning team have cost? A pertinent question. When in one short season five thousand dollars are spent for rubbers and six thousand dollars for doctors' services in one college, when it sometimes costs over fifty thousand to take the squad away for a single game, might it not be amusing to know what a team like Notre Dame's spent last year merely in traveling expenses? Such figures are, I believe, seldom published. Certainly they are not usually accessible to the ordinary sports writer.

But there are signs that the whole thing has gone too far and that a reaction is setting in. Sir Philip Gibbs, a man who has played the most bitter of all games, war, sums up the situation in England as follows:

> It is good to play the game. I believe in it. It would be a bad day for this country if we lost our interest in sport, and especially that form of sport which is played on a village green, on the common where the grass wears thin, on a tennis court behind a row of suburban houses, on a golf course which the city man can reach on a Saturday afternoon, and in the playgrounds of our public schools. It blows the cobwebs out of our eyes, keeps our nerves steady and our tempers sweet, and is the best cure for the drudgeries of life.
>
> But . . . sport is not a religion. It is a healthy amusement. When it becomes the purpose of life, instead of a recreation, it is a weakness rather than a strength, a folly rather than a virtue. Unfortunately and alas, men must work before they play, and a school that puts games before its studies as some of our schools are doing, is not producing men who will be able to compete with the intelligence and knowledge of other countries and take a more serious view of life. . . .
>
> Let us at least acknowledge that the sportsman, however fine his qualities, however wide the pattern of his tweed, however long his cigars, is not necessarily the noblest work of God, and that there are other types of manhood—the doctor, the artist, the scientist, the scholar, the singer—who are as much worthy of public recognition.

That such a state of things can come to pass in the land of The Great Sports Myth is almost too much to hope. But the clouds are not as thick as they have been. Despite the sporting writers, the sporting editors, the conductors of sporting columns, despite the paid college coaches and graduate managers of athletics, despite those who sneer when the suggestion of "undergraduate coaching" is made, despite, in short, all those who have an axe to grind in the matter, an ever-increasing number of sportsmen in this country are beginning to penetrate behind the smoke screen of The Great Sports Myth. The best hope for a saner and more sensible outlook on sports is to be found in the fact that if The Great Sports Myth grows but a little more it will defeat itself. It will fall from sheer topheaviness. There is a limit even to the credulity of a public brought up from childhood to believe in this fairy tale; possibly we are approaching that limit. At least let us hope so!

MIDWESTERN PRIMITIVE

A STORY

BY RUTH SUCKOW

BERT went flying over to get May Douglas to come to look at her table. It was all ready now, and she had to show it to someone. There was nobody at home who knew or cared about such things.

"May! Busy? Want to come and see the table now I've got it fixed?"

"Oh, yes!"

May was delighted. She left her ironing where it was and followed Bert with eager excitement. She thought that Bert Statzer was a wonder.

"We'll go right through the kitchen. Smells kind of good, don't it? There! Do you like it?"

"Bert!"

May was fairly speechless. She gazed at the table with fervent, faded eyes. It seemed to her the most beautiful thing she had ever seen. She didn't see how Bert had managed it—how she ever thought of such things and how she learned to do them. Bert was just a genius, that was all.

"You really think it looks nice?"

Bert drank in May's appreciation thirstily. She knew it didn't amount to much that May would admire anything she did; but she had to get appreciation from somewhere.

"I think it's just too beautiful for words. You little marvel! I just don't see how you do it." May sighed.

"Well, I'm glad you think it looks nice." Bert relaxed, with a long, gratified sigh, but stiffened again to say to Maynard, who had tagged them into the dining room, "Be careful, Maynard! If you move one of those things—!"

May was looking at everything: the little fringed napkins of pink crepe, the tinted glass goblets which Bert had sent away for, the spray of sweet peas at every place, one pink and then the next one lavender, made of tissue paper—such a pretty idea! She had never seen any napkins like those. Bert went on talking excitedly.

"Well, if it's good enough for those folks, it'll be good enough for anyone. I'll think I've accomplished something, May!"

"I don't see how it can help—"

"Oh, but I've never had anyone like them here—anyone really from away! It scares me. This looks nice to us, but these people have all seen things. Then, you know, they're going to have that famous writer with them. That's what I'm so excited about. If he likes it, then I thought maybe I could use his name. You know that'll help to get me known—if I can get his recommendation. Like those cold cream ads and everything—they're all doing that. Oh, I'm so excited, May! Feel my hands. Aren't they cold?"

"Why, you poor child!" May took Bert's tense, thin little hands and fondled them. "You don't need to feel that way. I don't see how anybody could ask for anything nicer. If *this* isn't good enough for them—"

"Oh, I know, but people like that who have been places and seen things—! Just the kind I've wanted to have come.

I don't expect anybody *here* to appreciate this—anybody but you and Mrs. Elliott. Well, I don't care, I've done the best I could. Maynard, look *out!*"

Bert's face was still gratified but screwed with worry. She knew how she really wanted things to look. She wanted flowered curtains instead of these old ones, and little painted tables instead of this big old thing. . . . Here was this little stuck-in-the-mud burg always holding her back, and her mother, and Arlie. Well, *she* didn't intend to be stuck in the mud, anyway. She had put up her sign where tourists could see it: "Hillside Inn." It made people in town laugh. They wanted to know where the "hillside" was. She didn't care. People like these could appreciate. Her tea room, if the dinner to-day was a success, would attract others; "interesting people" would come—the kind of people she craved to know and among whom she really belonged—and finally she would make so much money that she could get them all out of Shell Spring, herself and Maynard and Arlie, and really go somewhere.

She burst out, "The only trouble is mother!" And that was true. Arlie would stay out—he didn't want folks like that to see him in his old working clothes—but mother thought she had to go in and entertain them, just the way she did with anyone who came to the house. "I was so ashamed when those last people were here. The way mother came in—! Now, of course, May, *I* know mother's good as gold, and means it the best in the world, but what do folks like that think of her? I can't get her to fix herself up or anything. She doesn't understand. 'Ach, well, if they don't like the way I look, then they can look at something they do like.' That's the way she is. She doesn't know one person from another, doesn't see why these people are any different from any others. (May kept making distressed little murmurs. She did know how Mrs. Hohenschuh was!) Now, May, I went and bought a nice up-to-date dress for her, like people are wearing, when I was in Dubuque last. She'd look nice in it if she'd wear it. But do you think she will? No, sir. 'Ach, I never wore anything like that, I'll stick to what I been wearing.' You don't know, May—" Bert's voice tightened into bitterness—"nobody does, they all talk about how good-natured mother is. They don't know how stubborn she can be. Honestly, if mother didn't want to move, I don't believe a *motorcycle* running into her could budge her one inch. She's just hopeless."

"Oh, well, Bert, it'll come out," May said soothingly.

"I suppose. But she gives these people who come here the wrong idea. I don't want them to think we're all like she is."

"They won't think that about you!"

Bert felt encouraged after May's visit. She was excited, flying around the kitchen, doing the last few things, watching out for Maynard so that he would keep his little suit clean. Where was mother? she thought in exasperation. Oh, there! out in the garden, *digging*. Bert had no time to run out after her now. She snatched a look at the clock. Almost time for them to get here! Oh, dear, but she did want everything just right. What was mother thinking of? Did she want to get caught looking like that? "Maynard, if you don't keep away from that table—!" Bert thought she would go crazy.

Then mother came waddling serenely into the house.

"Want I should help?"

"Not at this late date!"

That was all Bert was going to say. But she couldn't hold in; even if it was more of a triumph to be simply cold and cutting, she had to let it all out.

"Here I am working, trying to get everything nice, with everything all fixed, and you don't care. You just go on with your old digging out there in the garden and don't see or care!"

Mrs. Hohenschuh looked abashed. "Ach, well," she began; then she retorted, "Well, I ain't wanted around

here. You wouldn't be satisfied anyway with things the way I'd do them. Ach, all this fuss! What are you making all this fuss about? All this business!"

She finished with an angry mutter and waddled off to the door. Bert didn't know whether she was going to change her dress or not. Well, if she wanted them to catch her looking that way, if she didn't care, didn't know any better . . . Bert was left trembling with anger. She flew about the kitchen, put a few more nuts on each plate of salad, with shaking fingers changed her old apron for the bright green smock she was going to wear to do the serving—it was what they were wearing; it was like the one she'd seen in the photograph of "Betty Lee's Tea Room" in the cooking magazine.

She went into the dining room. The shining glasses twinkled up at her, the sweet peas were rosy and stiff, the dishes looked so nice, the little napkins were so pretty . . . was everything right? She had got ideas wherever she could, but was she sure? She wanted to show these people that even if she did live out here in Shell Spring, she knew how things ought to be. She was going to have a *real* tea room some day. She had never felt that she belonged in Shell Spring, among the people who lived there. If she could only have the kind of things that other people had, do things the way that other people did them! She was going to do it even if she was stuck here. It had to be right. Everything was so lovely. Her anger and fear changed into a shining glory. The whole table dazzled before her eyes. She caught hold of Maynard, who was tagging her. "Look, Maynard!" she cried. "Isn't our table pretty?" She snatched a kiss from him in her trembling happiness.

Then she heard a car outside on the road. Her heart gave a wild leap. The people were coming!

A large green car rolled up to the cement block that still stood in the thick green grass beside the road as a relic of horse and buggy days. Bert in her green smock was waiting. Her black eyes were shining under short black hair threaded with early white. It seemed to her that it took the people a long while to get out of the car. She had time to wonder and to agonize over the place; the old frame house—she wished they could have had it stuccoed—what would these people think? Then the people were out and coming up the walk, and she had a confused, eager sight of two men and three women—one of them was the writer!

One man was in advance, a large man with a rosy face and shell-rimmed glasses. He came toward her smiling. That must be the one who had ordered the dinner, Mrs. Elliott's friend, Mr. Drayton.

"Mrs. Statzer?" Yes, that was who he was. "We heard you gave such good meals here that we thought we'd have to stop and try one of them."

Bert was so pleased and flattered that she scarcely heard his introductions, forgot the names just as soon as he mentioned them. She had been trying from the first to pick out the writer. It was the tall man, then, with the thick gray hair. She hadn't expected him to look . . . like that, somehow—grand, or at least in artistic-looking clothes, a hat with a wide brim, or glasses on a cord, or something. She wanted to show him that she knew who he was, even if most of the people here in town didn't. They hadn't known whom she meant when she said Harry Whetstone was coming here. Well, she hadn't known, either, until Mrs. Elliott told her—but she did now. She held out her hand, alert and eager.

"Oh, this is the writer, is it? I certainly was honored when I heard we were going to entertain you. I haven't read any of your works yet, but I intend to—I don't get much time for reading."

"No hurry, no hurry," the writer said with affable nonchalance.

She was looking, too, at the women. She hadn't got the relationships between the women and men figured out yet. One looked older, one wore that smart little green dress and hat, and then there was that one who might be any age—where did *she* come in? They were looking around. "Isn't this lovely!" one of them was saying. What did they mean? Bert's brilliant eyes were watching them. They were pointing to that terrible old brown tile in which mother had some geraniums planted. "Look, Harry! Isn't that lovely?" They couldn't really think it was *lovely*. "Lovely" had a different, suspicious meaning as these women used it. Bert's eyes were devouring the details of their clothes. She led them into the house, burning with anxiety, sensitiveness, eagerness; she knew how many things were wrong.

"I suppose you folks would like to wash a little after your drive. We haven't any bathroom, I'm sorry to say. We want to have one, but this town is so slow, they've never piped the water out this far. But if you don't mind just washing in the old-fashioned wash-bowls—"

She hated that so. But they were nice about it.

"You know, you're out in the country," she said with a nervous laugh. "and you have to take us the way you find us."

She ushered the women into her best bedroom, the guest room off the parlor. This was the one room in the house in which she could take some pride. She had fixed it up with furniture she had painted herself, and she had put the stencil on the walls—all after the plan of the Model Bedroom in the household magazine for which she had taken subscriptions last winter.

"Now, if you'll just take off your hats and put them wherever you find a place." She was eager and flustered. "I'm afraid I'll have to ask you gentlemen to go upstairs." She was ashamed to take them up to her old room, full of horrid old dark furniture—was afraid, too, as she sped up the steep stairs ahead of them, although she knew it was all right, she had been up at four o'clock cleaning and getting the house ready. She banged the door of her mother's room shut as she went past. "Now I think you'll find everything—" She ran down.

The women were talking in the bedroom. She heard a soft laugh. She lingered in the front room, sensitive and alert, but she couldn't hear. The smartness of their clothes actually hurt her, showed her all kinds of unsuspected deficiencies in herself, although it pleased and gratified her too. They were the kind of people she wanted to know.

But when she went into the dining room and saw the table she was exultant again. "If you'll excuse me," she called, "I'm afraid I'll have to be in the kitchen." They were nice! Oh, dear. She had forgotten to ask the author to write in her visitors' book. She was going to have her book just as they did in the real Eastern tea rooms Mrs. Elliott had told her about. Well, there was time. The table looked so sweet! And yet she was obscurely hurt and smarting. She wasn't sure those women weren't laughing.

Arlie had come into the kitchen and was washing his hands. "Well, are they here?" he asked. He didn't exactly like their coming, or to have Bert always fussing around with things like this, but then, he was all right, he kept out of the way. Bert was taking the roast chicken from the oven. Roasted, not fried. "People in the East never think of *frying* chicken." Mrs. Elliott had never tasted fried chicken all the time that she was in the East. Bert wanted these people to be able to say they had eaten as good a meal here in the Hillside Inn as ever they had got in any city restaurant. She had followed the menus in the cooking magazine. She was so excited now that the ordeal was on that she felt herself working in a kind of tense calm. She gave Arlie his dinner in the back

kitchen. These people would see that she knew how things should be done.

"You can come in to dinner now."

There was a moment of quiet and formality as she seated them. They didn't exclaim like those last people. "Well, well, I didn't know we were going to find a first-class hotel here in Shell Spring!" that other man had cried. She served them, wondering if she oughtn't to have got in Donna Peterson to help her—but then, Donna wouldn't "know," and she wanted things right. She tried to remember what things should go to the right and what to the left. When she went out to the kitchen she ordered Maynard to keep back. She was going to bring him in after the meal, all dressed up in his little new suit, and just introduce him. "This is my little boy Maynard." She had read, in a story, about a mother doing that.

Through her preoccupation with the food and the serving—wondering if everything tasted just right—she heard snatches of the conversation. The people seemed a little tired, maybe from that long drive. "Well, this is familiar." What did they mean by that? Did they like the little napkins, or were they laughing at them? But those napkins were exactly the kind that were used in all the tea rooms now! "Standardization, I tell you. It gets into all the corners." That meant nothing to Bert. They certainly must like those salads that May Douglas had said were simply too pretty to be eaten. Nice salads were things people here in town didn't fuss with—all those "do-dads" mother called them. The people were affable and talking among themselves, and yet Bert could sense that the dinner didn't seem to be going exactly as she had hoped that it would. She had somehow thought that they would be more astonished and delighted, and that they would take her right in with them. Her thin cheeks were flushed. In the kitchen it was as if she were working in a vacuum, not in that shining flush of triumph she knew and craved. How fast it was all going, how soon this great dinner would be over!

Mrs. Hohenschuh had come into the kitchen from the back way. "Mother, you went and put on that old percale dress of yours, and I had that new one all laid out for you ready!" That seemed the crowning catastrophe. Bert suddenly began to tremble with anger. When she came into the kitchen the next time she whispered furiously, "You aren't going to let those people see you in that! Since you had to go put it on, just to be stubborn, you can stay out of sight." How could she ever get anywhere with all this family to pull up after her? Mother looked like an old farm woman. Bert felt ready to cry and could scarcely bear to hear the quiet sound of the voices in the dining room.

The coffee cups were all set out on the little old sewing table that she was using for a serving table. She was going to serve her coffee with dessert, the right way. "Ach, let 'em have their coffee!" Mrs. Hohenschuh pleaded. She thought it was terrible to deprive people of coffee all through a meal. She didn't much mind Bert's reproaches. "Ach, Bert, she always gets so cross when she's got anything to do, I don't know." The old lady made off into the garden. But Bert knew how mother was. It would be a miracle if she let any people get away without talking to them, and probably telling them the whole family history!

Bert took in the fragrant coffee and home-made ice cream. Well, they did like that! The woman in the cute green dress (she didn't seem to be the author's wife, after all; that was the one who didn't look nearly so much like "somebody"—it surprised Bert) said very flatteringly, "What delicious ice cream! Did you make it yourself?" The older woman—that was Mrs. Drayton—smiled up at Bert. The talk was freer now. The author seemed to be saying the least of any of them, though. That

seemed funny to Bert. Mr. Drayton was lots more talkative and full of fun—peppier. She bet he could write awfully good stories, better than the other one, if he just wanted to.

She was almost happy, when she happened to look out of the window and saw mother climbing up from the cellarway outside, lugging something—a bottle! Oh, for . . . Before she got a chance to go out to the kitchen the old lady came, shy but beaming, into the room, with a big bottle of that dandelion wine. Bert was in torment. As if these people cared for anything like that!

But there mother stood and there was nothing to do but introduce her. Bert suffered agony. It was all the worse, somehow, that they were being so polite and nice. "This is my mother, Mrs. Hohenschuh." Mother began to beam at that. She loved to entertain people—that was all right, of course, but she had never learned that people didn't do things the way she used to, any more.

And mother was starting right in.

"Well, I thought it was mean you folks had to go all that time without your coffee, so I just brought you something else to drink. If you ain't afraid somebody's going to get after you—ach, it's all so funny these days—maybe you'll take a little drink of this wine. It's dandelion. I made it."

Bert couldn't stand it. She made for the kitchen. She sat down there, clenched her fists, and felt that she would actually fly to pieces.

The voices were louder in the dining room. She heard delighted laughter. Yes, now mother had an audience, and she was just laying herself out for them—Bert knew how! She burned with humiliation. The whole thing was spoiled. How could anybody in this town try to do things the way they ought to be done?

Her mother came smiling out to the kitchen.

"Where are them little glasses gone?"

"Mother, *why* did you have to go in there with that stuff?"

"Ach, what are you fussing about? They like it."

Bert got up and began feverishly to clean the messy plates and stack them together. She couldn't eat a thing herself, not even good little crisp bits of chicken that were left. Mother had got hold of the people now. She heard them leave the dining room, and then the whole party trailed past the kitchen windows. Mother waddled in the lead. She was going to take them all out and show them her flower beds.

Maynard was whining. "Are you going to take me in and introduce me, mother?"

Bert looked at him, cold and remote. "No."

They were all out in the garden. Mrs. Hohenschuh always thought it her duty as a hostess to take her guests out and show them everything she had. Here where she felt that she "had things nice," too—this place in town which she and Mr. Hohenschuh had bought when they moved in from the country—she could take real enjoyment with visitors, even if Bert did go on about the place and say how behind the times it was. But it was a long time since she had got hold of any people so appreciative as these.

"Well, I don't know as there's anything you folks'll care much about looking at (she didn't mean that; she said it in a rich, comfortable tone). I only got the same old kind of flowers I've always had, they ain't any of these new-fangled kinds with fancy names here."

"Oh, we adore seeing them!" the woman in the green dress cried enthusiastically.

Mrs. Hohenschuh beamed. "Well, I think they're pretty nice, they suit me, but there's lots of folks nowadays wants different things, I guess. Ja! Anyway, that don't worry me. I let 'em talk. I go on doing things the way I want to."

The people all laughed, and she was gratified.

"Well, here's what I got. I put in all

these things myself. Bert, she don't want to bother, she's got too many irons in the fire all the time."

"This is lovely!"

Mrs. Hohenschuh stood fat and beaming while they looked and wandered about. She thought her garden was pretty nice—ja, you bet she did! And these folks all seemed to think so too. Why, they was awful nice folks! Why had Bert got so fussed over having them here to dinner? Why, they was real nice and common! That one in the green dress (she was older than she wanted to let on, too, Mrs. Hohenschuh shrewdly judged) did the most running around and palavering; but those other two, that husband and wife, enjoyed things just as much. The man in the glasses was *real* nice. So was his wife, although she didn't have so much to say. But those other two, she kind of liked the best of the bunch. The woman was real sensible, the things she said and the questions she asked; and the man kind of trailed around after the others and looked at things on his own account, the way Mrs. Hohenschuh liked to have folks do. That showed he wasn't putting it on, he was really enjoying himself.

Along with her answers and her explanations, Mrs. Hohenschuh managed to get in a good part of the family history. Bert had a fit when she told things like that; but Mrs. Hohenschuh never felt right until she'd—well, kind of given folks the facts and the right idea about the family. They'd hear it all anyway, so she might as well tell it herself.

"Have you had your garden long, Mrs. Hohenschuh?"

"Ja, ever since we moved into town. That's—how long is it, a'ready?—ach, it's twenty years, I guess! Bert, she was only just in high school. That was partly why we come. The boys, they didn't get to finish, but Pa he said Bert was to get her diploma, she was always the smartest, anyway. Ja, how old was Bert then? She's thirty-seven now. Ja, she's such a thin little sliver, I don't know, women seems to want to be that way now, but she's thirty-seven! Her and Arlie's been married twelve years a'ready; and then this here little fellow's all they've got! Ach, I don't know!"

As she talked, in her deep comfortable voice rich with chuckles and drolleries of German inflection, she waddled about among the flower beds, pointing out this kind and that. "These? Moss roses, I call 'em. I guess that ain't the right name, some folks says not, but they grow just the same—ain't that so? Ja, the old lady Douglas over there, when she was living, she had to have the right names for all her plants, but I told her mine grew better'n hers did if I did call 'em wrong!" The moss roses in their flat matted bed on the hot earth were gay spots of scarlet and crimson, yellow, cerise, and white. They made one of the women think of the colors in patchwork quilts, she said.

"She's got the real old honest-to-God peppermint! I haven't smelled any of that for years."

"Peppermint? Ja, that I always have. That I like too."

The woman in the green dress came running and clutched the other younger woman. "Come here, Jean! I want to show you. The pump! Isn't that just right? And see here—all these little flower pots set out and slips started in them. Just see, this foliage stuff, this old red and green funny leaf stuff, my grandmother used to have that. And look back there! One of those big green wire flower stands that I suppose used to stand in the bay window. Didn't you just yearn to take your dolls promenading on that, and they wouldn't let you, because you might spoil the plants? Isn't this perfect?" Mrs. Hohenschuh had told them, "Ja, sure, you look around anywhere you want to; what's the use of hiding what you got?" Harry Whetstone had been enjoying the old lady's naïve revelations, but now he lounged about, poking into the woodshed where the light fell dim and dusty through a little square window high up

in the wall, and into a tool shed where pans of seeds were set about in the midst of a clutter of ancient furniture. It was like going back thirty years.

There was a little apple orchard at the side, grown up to tall grass now; and there, on one of his silent excursions, he discovered a two-foot troll planted down in a tiny hollow with grass grown about the base as it binds in ancient tombstones, and a casual offering of fallen apples about his chipped feet. The woman in the green dress came running over.

"What have you found, Harry? *Oh!* Isn't that marvelous? Oh, Mrs. Hohenschuh, we've found something simply wonderful, won't you tell us what that is?"

"That? Ach, is that old thing still out there? Ja, it's funny, but then I don't know . . . Pa, he was the one that got that thing."

"It's German, isn't it?"

"Ja, it's German, all right. Pa, he come from the old country, he come over here when he was only eighteen years old. He had just twenty dollars when he landed in this country. Ja, it's German, that's what it is. Pa, he always wanted to fix up the back yard and make him a garden—that was why he got this funny fellow, that was one reason we moved into town when we did, because Pa wanted to fix up a place . . . ja, and then we hadn't lived here but a year or two when Pa got killed, he got run over, he was thinking of things the way he always done, and didn't hear the train coming . . . ja, that's the way of it!" But after a moment, she roused herself and went on, "Bert, she always had a fit over that fellow. She was the one took him out of the front yard and lugged him out here. But I don't know—" Mrs. Hohenschuh chuckled—"I always kind of liked the little fellow. He means good. You can see that. Well, I guess he's where she ain't likely to find him. She's too busy inside there to fool around out here. I'm the one does that."

Slowly, Mrs. Hohenschuh in the lead, they trailed away from the orchard. The troll, with his colors faded to dim faint tints and with curls chipped off his beard, stood smiling a one-sided but jovial smile at the rotting apples about his broken feet that had almost grown into the orchard ground.

Mrs. Hohenschuh picked one of each kind of flowers for every person. "Hold on, now! You ain't got any of the pansies yet." A circle of sticks set upright—little thin sticks with flaking bark—inclosed the colored pansies. The tiger lilies grew in a straggling bunch tied with twine. "Pick yourself some if you like 'em. Go ahead!" What else were the flowers here for? "Here's a color you ain't got, if you like them zinnies, Mrs.—well, you'll have to excuse me, I can't remember all you folks's names." The sun shone down brightly on the garden, blaring out the hot colors of the moss roses, throwing clear antique shadows from the grape arbor, glinting and losing itself in coolness in the thick wet grass around the pump through which silent little streams of water soaked slowly. They all had a drink before they went into the house. The sides of the cold glass were frosted with wet. The family story was entwined with their wanderings among the paths of the garden, tangled with the colors of the flowers, and brightened over with sunshine.

The house seemed cool when they went inside.

"Oh, you don't want to go yet! Come in and set awhile and let's finish our visit."

Mrs. Hohenschuh led them into the parlor.

"There's lots of things you ain't seen yet."

Mrs. Drayton was tired, even Mr. Drayton—although still genial—was ready to stop; but the others seemed insatiable, and the writer most of all. Bert had heard her mother's invitation and burned with helpless shame. What else was mother going to show? There was no chance for her talk with the

author. It was hopeless trying to lead mother off now. Bert followed the others into the front room.

"I'll show you Pa's picture, Mr.—ach, that name's gone again! Well, I guess you know I mean you, don't you? Sure! That's right."

She got down that old faded purple plush album that held all the family pictures: Bert and the boys when they were youngsters, Mr. Hohenschuh when he first came to this country, chance pictures of shamefaced hired men. The writer looked at all the pictures with a gravity that Bert couldn't fathom, Mr. Drayton laughed and made funny remarks about the clothes that pleased mother, and Mrs. Drayton looked at everything last with a pleased but tired smile; she wasn't quite in on all the things the others were, Bert thought. "Ja, look at that one! Ain't he funny-looking, though? He was a cousin of mine. Ja, now they all look funny." Bert sat and suffered. Maynard sidled into the room. He couldn't give up the promise of being introduced. They were all nice to him. The women smiled. But they went on making that fuss over mother.

When she had shown them the photographs she had to let them see her other things: the shells and the "curios" that she prized so, and that she kept on a shelf in the bookcase. "Look here! Did you ever see anything like this before?" How could they act so pleased, unless they were just false and putting it on to get mother to make a fool of herself? Bert could have cried. That shell! Of course they'd seen shells. They'd been everywhere. Those old feathers from the tail of the peacock they used to have out on the farm; the cocoanut husk with the stamps and address label on it; that big long German pipe; the glass paper-weight with the snowfall inside. What else could she find to show them? They were asking about fancy work. Did she ever make the real old knitted lace? Ja, not so much knit as crochet, though—wait, she'd show them! It would be just like her to ask them all up to her room to look through those terrible drawers—and if she did that Bert was ready to kill herself. That room of mother's (and it wasn't any use talking to her about it, Bert couldn't make her do a *thing*) with dresses hanging on nails, and quilts piled up in the corner, drawers filled with old shawls, pieces of cloth, silk gowns, baby dresses—a perfect museum!

Well, they weren't paying any attention to her and Maynard anyway, so Bert went back to the dining room. She might as well clear off the table. At least they were staying a long time and seemed to be enjoying themselves. In that way she supposed the dinner was a success. But she had thought that she could talk to them. It was she to whom they ought to be paying attention—she who appreciated them, and knew how different they were, and wanted to be like them; they couldn't really mean it when they made such a fuss over mother. They must be laughing at her. What could they see in all this old junk? That was the kind of stuff that Bert was trying so hard to get rid of. That was what the tea room was *for*—so that she could make some money, and get to know the right kind of folks, and maybe live like other people in other places. All the very awfullest things in the house—things *no*-body had any more! What kind of an idea of the family would they have? She looked into the parlor, and there was mother getting out all her old fancy work: that terrible piece, that huge table spread, with squarish horses and dogs and roosters crocheted into it, and they were saying "lovely"! She heard them.

"That dress! Isn't it perfect? The real thing."

"Oh, she's a jewel!"

"Lovely!"

They were going at last. They were very nice to Bert then, as if they realized that she had been neglected. The

women sought her out in the dining room. "Such a good dinner you gave us!"

"Well, I'm glad you liked it. I didn't know . . ."

She followed them into the parlor, feeling appeased and excited again, even though she seemed to scent a tactful patronage. But they were all complimenting her now, and she drank in the praise, eagerly, but afraid to believe they meant it.

Mr. Drayton had taken her aside. "And what do we owe you for this fine meal you gave us?" he asked in a low, genial tone.

"Well . . . a dollar apiece," Bert said firmly. She had heard that all the city tea rooms charged a dollar and a quarter now. Of course, she couldn't ask quite as much as a city tea room, that had everything just up to snuff; but her dinner was good, and she knew it, and she was going to stick to business. He didn't seem to think that she was charging them too much, however. He counted out some bills and handed them right over to her. But when she came to look at them, there were too many—a five and an extra one!

"Oh, I can't—why, you've given me—"

He tapped her shoulder. "That's all right. Don't notice it. Doesn't begin to pay for the entertainment we've had here."

She still protested, flushed and happy, but he wouldn't listen to her; so she guessed there was nothing else for her to do.

She hadn't forgotten about the visitors' book. She got it out now. All the tea rooms in the East had those, Mrs. Elliott had said. She had seen several famous names in one place where she had eaten. It advertised the place; and then it was an honor, too, to think that such people had eaten there. Bert was a little bashful but determined.

"I hope you don't mind before you go." She laid down the new visitors' book, a notebook with black covers from the drug store, before the author. "I'd like to have you put your name in my book so other folks can see you've been here."

He didn't seem very much flattered about it, she thought, but anyway he wasn't going to refuse. How funny! She would have supposed it would please folks to be asked to do things like that. The others teased him a little. "You can't escape, Harry!" They seemed to think it was some sort of joke. Bert stood flushed, waiting and determined. She said generously that she wanted all the other names, too.

"Yes, I do. You're all along with Mr. Whetstone. Anyway, I know you're all . . ." She meant to say "important," or something of that kind, too; but she couldn't just seem to finish it.

"Well, go on, girls. Sign yourselves," Mr. Drayton commanded.

They all signed. Mrs. Drayton blushed when she did it.

Bert wasn't through with the author yet. Before she let him go she was going to get all she'd meant to get out of him.

"I wondered if you'd let me use your name, Mr. Whetstone."

He still had that funny, kind of bored way. His wife was really nicer.

"Say he ate with a large appetite, even mightier than usual," Mrs. Whetstone said.

But it seemed to Bert they were all amused.

She wanted to talk to the author about his books. She thought she ought to do that. "You know I never met an author before," she said. "I've always been wanting to, because—" she flushed —"well, I've always wanted to write myself. I always thought I could if I just had the time to do it."

"Don't," he assured her solemnly. But he wasn't as impressed as she had thought he would be. "It's much better to cook biscuits like those we devoured this noon. Infinitely better to make dandelion wine like your mother."

He was joking, of course. But Bert

didn't quite like it. She had meant what she said, seriously, and she had thought he would encourage her.

Mrs. Hohenschuh came into the house, waddling and breathless.

"Dandelion wine!" she cried. "Ja, if you liked that, then you come back here and you'll get some of my wild grape this fall. You come and let *me* get you up a dinner. I'll give you some real genuine fried chicken and you won't have to wait all meal for your coffee."

They all laughed. They seemed to think that that was *funny*. The author said that he would certainly come! He'd wanted a meal like that for the last fifteen years. Mother had been out in the garden again. She had dug up some plants and wrapped them in newspapers, and brought some slips for the women to take along and set out.

"You take these with you. Sure, you go ahead!"

She parceled them out right and left and gave directions. The people went out to the car swamped with packages. They were thanking Mrs. Hohenschuh profusely, and promising to do just as she told them, laughing delightedly at everything she said. She went right up to the car with them, as she always did with people who were leaving. Bert stood back with the bills wadded up in her hot hand, and with Maynard beside her. They had complimented her on the dinner, done all she had asked of them; but she had thought that from *these* people—the kind she admired, not just the folks in town who had never known what she was after—she would get her own appreciation at last.

"Good-by, Mrs. Hohenschuh. We certainly enjoyed this."

"You come again, all of you. You just drop in any time you feel like it."

"I'm coming back some day to hear more of those stories," the writer warned her.

"Ach, them old-time stories? Ja, I know plenty of them!"

"And we're coming after that dinner, Mrs. Hohenschuh. Real old fried chicken. Remember! You've promised us."

Mr. Drayton took the wheel, the big engine started humming, the car rolled ahead. They waved—they were going.

"Good-by, Mrs. Statzer! . . . And Maynard!"

But they had to remember to call back that.

"Well!" Mrs. Hohenschuh said gratified, climbing back onto the walk. "They was real nice folks! I don't see why you made such a fuss over having them. You needn't. The other way would have been just as good."

"Look at your hands, mother!" Bert said bitterly.

"Ja, I know. I dug up them plants. Well, it don't matter now, they're gone anyway."

She waddled serenely to the house.

Bert stood looking after the car, still clutching her bills. She would be able to report to May that the dinner had been a success. The people had enjoyed themselves, they had paid her well, let her have their recommendations. Her tea room was started. But the thing she had wanted most of all, and waited for all her life—their appreciation—they had given to mother, who couldn't even understand or care for it. Bert didn't yet see what their idea was.

"A GENTLEMAN'S SECOND-HAND SUIT"

BY THOMAS HARDY

(1840–1928)

HERE it is hanging in the sun
By the pawnshop door,
A dress-suit—all its revels done
Of heretofore.
Long-drilled to the waltzers' swing and sway,
As its tokens show:
What it has seen, what it could say
If it did but know!

The sleeve bears still a print of powder
Rubbed from her arms
When she warmed up as the notes swelled louder
And livened her charms—
Or rather theirs, for beauties many
Leant there no doubt,
Leaving these telltale traces when he
Spun them about.

Its cut seems rather in bygone style
On looking close,
So it mayn't have bent it for some while
To the dancing pose:
Anyhow, often within its clasp
Fair partners hung,
Assenting to the wearer's grasp
With soft sweet tongue.

Where is, alas, the gentleman
Who wore this suit?
And where are his ladies? Tell none can:
Gossip is mute.
Some of them may forget him quite
Who smudged his sleeve,
Some think of a wild and whirling night
With him and grieve.

BACK TO THE OLD DIPLOMACY

A SURVEY OF EUROPEAN ALLIANCES

BY SISLEY HUDDLESTON

DIFFICULT is the task of the observer of international affairs who endeavors to enlighten and direct public opinion. If he genuinely desires to assure, to the full measure of his influence, the perpetuation of peace, he is often puzzled as to whether he should be perfectly frank, and thus become a scare-monger; or be blandly optimistic, and thus conceal facts which, though disturbing, might, if known, stimulate the peoples to sound reaction. For my part, I believe that the very talk of war may bring war, and I should refuse to join the tragic chorus of "ancestral voices prophesying war." I believe that those who are always declaring that the cause is lost are certainly doing their best to lose the cause. I believe that war can easily be averted, and that men and women throughout the world are, in the vast majority, resolutely opposed to the renewal of a stupid method of settling differences—or rather of endeavoring to settle them; for war has never yet succeeded in removing the causes of quarrel, and whatever is won in war is always in jeopardy. As Victor Hugo said, Austerlitz is always balanced by Waterloo.

But occasionally it may be incumbent upon the sincere writer to utter a warning. When matters, as he sees them, are going altogether wrong, he has to decide whether, without seeking to spread panic, he should not boldly uncover the unpleasant facts. It is an unenviable role. It is one which I myself undertake with the greatest reluctance. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the moment has come to denounce with no uncertain voice the aberrations, not of the peoples, but of the diplomatists who are surely getting on the wrong lines, and are deceiving the expectations that were placed upon them.

Let me make my position clear. From the earliest days I have been a warm supporter of the League of Nations. I may even claim that I had a small part in its inception. I have helped to defend it from the attacks of Anti-Leaguers. But this does not, if I am to be honest, imply that hereafter, in any circumstances, I must refrain from criticism of the League of Nations. We must take the League for what it is—that is to say, essentially, in its actual form, a European body. Its chief purpose is to keep the peace in Europe, and if it succeeds in that purpose, limited as it may appear to be at first sight, it will have kept the peace in the world. Now the worst enemies of the League idea are those over-zealous supporters of the League who decline to acknowledge its faults and who would save the face of the institution at the expense of the face of the world. We want stimulants, not opiates. If the League is being used as a screen behind which the old diplomacy is at work we must say so. If the old kind of pact which led to the old kind of war is being made, but is being couched in a new demagogic phraseology which hides

its real character, we must say so. We must not permit ourselves to applaud intrigues merely because those intrigues are dignified by high-sounding names. We must beware of regarding the League as a supernatural power apart from ourselves which will automatically preserve us from all dangers.

Mr. H. G. Wells has lately scoffed at those who think they have done enough when they have paid their subscription to the Union for the League of Nations—or to some similar organization—and have attended a meeting or a garden party under its auspices. The League is not a pillow. The price of peace, like the price of liberty, is eternal vigilance. If the League creates a false sense of security it may become positively harmful; for without it many people would be more active and more intelligent in their campaign against war-mongers.

II

This is a long preface, but I cannot dispense with it. For I would not be misunderstood as ranging myself among the sneerers and the adversaries of the new regime: I would not be regarded as of little faith; but neither would I be thought to suppose that faith is sufficient without works. After a careful survey of the European scene I have deliberately come to the conclusion that we are slipping back to the old diplomacy. Moreover, that return to the old diplomacy is particularly dangerous because it is—to use a word which was popular a few years ago—camouflaged. While the diplomatists are asserting that their policy is based upon the League of Nations they are busily engaged in making combinations which are totally opposed to the whole conception of the League.

What was the old diplomacy? It consisted in constructing in Europe a perilous equilibrium of rival groupings. Some of the treaties of the pre-War days were secret. On that point I do not specially insist. There is probably less secrecy to-day than there was fifteen years ago. Pacts are published. It is true that often negotiations are conducted privately, and it may or it may not be true that bargains are struck which are never disclosed. But I do not think that matters overmuch. The quarrel between those who would have a diplomacy of the market-place and those who would have a diplomacy of conspirators' dens is somewhat unreal. There is a great deal of diplomacy that depends for its success on quiet conversations. Just as it is foolish to pull up plants by their roots to see what progress they are making, so is it foolish to give publicity to delicate negotiations. The results, however, unless democracy is a fiction, should be made known. And in fact those results are always made known. I remember, for example, that the Franco-Russian Accord, which was formulated in 1891, was nominally secret for some years, but, nevertheless, everybody knew of it. It was apparent in the general policy of the two countries. I do not think it is going too far to state that (with the rarest exceptions) there is no such thing as secret diplomacy. So-called secrets are disclosed to too many people to remain obscure for anybody whose function it is to understand international affairs. Let us, therefore, dismiss as of little importance this phase of the old diplomacy.

The truth about the old diplomacy is that the various countries cultivated special friendships, which always implied special enmities. There were alliances which were always provocative of counter-alliances. Sometimes a Machiavellian country managed to obtain a footing in both camps. Italy, for example, before 1914 was the ally of Germany and of Austria; but Italy had an understanding with France. After the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 Europe soon began to shape itself diplomatically. There were vacillations; sometimes a nation would flirt with a rival nation. Germany, to cite another instance, was

at certain moments not indisposed to come to an arrangement with Russia, and even made overtures to England. Yet, neglecting these nuances which do not really disturb the general diplomatic movement, there was always the potential Triple Alliance ranged against the potential Triple Entente. Nor were these alliances openly aggressive. They were always described as defensive, precisely as they are to-day. We know where these pre-War friendships led. Every time an understanding was reached in Europe, Europe trembled. Every handshake was accompanied by a shaking of fists. Every proclamation of peace made war more certain.

Now to this conception of diplomacy those who constructed the League of Nations opposed another conception. They considered that while there were groups in Europe there would necessarily be a strong possibility of collusions. The League, it was held, should be the unique inspirer, director, and center of international friendships. In spite of such notable absentees as the United States and Russia, the League was broadly, so far as Europe was concerned, a comprehensive institution. This comprehensive institution ruled out separate and partial alliances. If two or more of the members of the League agreed always to act together, then logically those two or more countries might find themselves acting against the decision of the League. How is it possible for the League to judge without bias, without prejudice, if certain of its members have pooled their interests in advance and have pledged themselves to consider, not the general interests, but their own immediate interests? I hold, therefore, that special pacts of friendship in Europe are contrary to the spirit and purpose of the League.

It is a diplomatic axiom that an alliance is always directed against a third party. In point of fact, if A and B make a pact by which they declare that they will stick together, it is almost certainly because they have something to fear from C. When C hears of the alliance between A and B, he grows alarmed in his turn and makes a pact with D. These groups have a tendency to grow. E and F consider whether they should remain neutral for the time being or whether they should adhere to the A system or to the C system. Thus you have, by these pacts and counter-pacts, a division of Europe, and if there are such pacts to-day, no matter in what language they are written, they are destructive of the entire theory of the League.

Further, when we come to examine the European pacts of to-day, we shall find that they are all founded on the principle of the Sanctity of the Status Quo. It is possible to argue that the 1919 Peace Treaties should not be revised. It is possible to argue that the League should not be given any authority to make readjustments even though they appear to be necessary and equitable. It is possible to argue that each country is entitled to look after itself and to draw up whatever regulations it pleases for its own protection. But what nobody can reasonably argue is that the particular accords based upon the Sanctity of the Status Quo are compatible with the principle of the League.

Turn to Articles 19 and 20 of the Covenant, and you will find that they expressly state that the Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration, by members of the League, of treaties which have become inapplicable, and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world. All obligations inconsistent with the Covenant are abrogated by the signing of the Covenant. It surely follows if members of the League agree to stand together against any attempts to change the status quo that they are expressly repudiating the Covenant, and, therefore, destroying the League of which they profess to be supporters. It does not in the least matter whether they throw flowers on the League as they

sign—those flowers are merely the wreaths that one places on a tomb.

III

I have never been able to understand how the League can tolerate, much less register and indorse, such pacts. It is no part of my plan to attack the policy of any European country. I simply wish to survey the situation and see it as it is, not as it is usually seen through the mists of a vague ideology. What, then, are the facts?

Throughout Central Europe, which is broken up into a number of states, some of them new, there is a series of interlocking treaties, many of them admittedly directed against other countries which are deemed to be capable of aggression. The existence of these treaties denotes a definite distrust of the efficiency of the League of Nations. The process began in 1920. There was then signed —on August 14th—a treaty between Czechoslovakia and Jugoslavia, which was renewed on August 31, 1922. On August 23, 1921, Roumania and Czechoslovakia entered into similar engagements. On June 7, 1921, Roumania and Jugoslavia signed a treaty which, like the others, is supported by military conventions, and which, like the others, applies particularly to Hungary, regarded as a potential adversary. Bulgaria is also envisaged in the treaty between Roumania and Jugoslavia.

This association of the three countries which have been called the Profiteers of the War is known as the Little Entente. Czechoslovakia is a new country, carved out of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. Roumania received a good deal of territory, some of which is still hotly disputed, from Hungary and from Russia. Jugoslavia, formerly known as Serbia, has likewise been greatly enlarged at the expense of her neighbors.

I have nothing to say against these countries as such. They have been lately the object of vigorous attacks from certain quarters, but whether those attacks are deserved or not need not concern us here. We may believe that it was a mistake to shatter with a sledge-hammer the ramshackle Austro-Hungarian Empire, and we may think that glaring injustices have been done. That is as it may be: it is another question into which it would take us long to inquire. Nor need we inquire, in this place, into the alleged grievances of the racial minorities. It is superfluous again to challenge the right of these three countries to form a solid block in Central Europe. They must do as they choose. But what we are entitled to do, and what is pertinent to our present purpose, is to declare unreservedly that the existence of the Little Entente, with its clear enunciation of the principle of the status quo, is incompatible with the supposed system of the League of Nations.

There is a second category of treaties. Poland and Roumania, on March 26, 1926, signed a treaty which establishes their solidarity in face of Russia, from whom they have both taken land which Russia is not likely to leave permanently in their possession if ever she has the opportunity of recovering it. This land was given to Poland and Roumania by the Allied Powers at the Peace Conference, from which Russia was absent. For the time being, Russia is governed by the Soviets, who have no friends outside their own country; and Russia is comparatively feeble. We must, however, remember that whatever we think of the Bolsheviks, Russia will some day recover and will remain one of the great European Powers.

There is a third set of treaties which complete the cycle of Central European Pacts. They connected the countries we have already mentioned with France. There is the Franco-Polish Treaty of February 19, 1921, with a Military Convention of June 27, 1922. There is the Franco-Czechoslovakian Treaty of January 25, 1924. There is the Franco-Roumanian Treaty of June 10, 1926. Finally there is the Franco-Jugoslavian

Treaty of November 11, 1927. The Franco-Polish and the Franco-Czechoslovakian Treaties have been incorporated in the Locarno System by the declarations of October 16, 1925; and, as Pertinax, the well-known French diplomatic writer, points out, "they are more far-reaching in their scope than the Franco-Jugoslavian and the Franco-Roumanian Treaties, inasmuch as they speak of assistance and not simply of co-operation." This is because German affairs, which are regarded as the main object of the Franco-Polish and Franco-Czechoslovakian Treaties, have a more direct interest for France than Hungarian and Bulgarian affairs, which are the object of the other treaties. The distinction is worth noting, but, from the point of view of the diplomatists, all these treaties are interwoven.

Nobody will pretend that this particular group of pacts constitutes in itself a menace against anybody. They are indeed, as they profess, strictly defensive. There is not the smallest likelihood of, say, France or Roumania going to war against Germany or Russia or Bulgaria. They have all they want, and they have no reason for taking any steps against their neighbors. Incidentally, I must affirm that the pacific intentions of France are apparent to anybody who has had any opportunities of observation. Legends concerning militarism have been too long exploited. No, these countries are not going to wage war. But that is not the point. The point is that, instead of relying on the League of Nations, of which they are members, and in which they ostensibly believe, they have thought it necessary to make a little league of their own inside the League, and to present a united front to other nations, most of them equally members of the League, who, in their judgment, may some day attack them.

There are in Europe two kinds of nations. There are what we may call dynamic nations—that is to say, dissatisfied nations which protest against their lot; and there are static nations—that is to say, nations which simply mean to hold to the privileges and possessions they have acquired. If everything could indeed be stereotyped then there would be nothing to fear. But the problem which arises is due to the possibility of claims being urged which will be resisted by the powers in possession. To-day the combination appears to be fairly strong, but experience teaches us that such combinations are often fragile.

IV

It would, of course, be too simple if the Central European countries, by uniting in this manner, and securing the aid of one of the Great Powers, could have things exactly their own way. In the nature of the case, there must be a reaction. There must be a reply to the multiple alliances. So far, the vanquished countries have been unable to assert themselves very actively. But at last a wedge begins to be driven into this Central European structure. It is Italy who openly opposes the so-called hegemony of France and places herself at the head of what may develop into a counter-movement. There was practically no discussion about France's treaty with Belgium or with most of the Central European countries; but a veritable storm broke out when France signed a pact with Jugoslavia.

The protest arose because one of the victorious countries, and not one of the vanquished countries, was concerned. Italian interests were, in the opinion of Italy, touched by the Franco-Jugoslavian understanding. It is well known that Italy was somewhat badly treated by the peacemakers in Paris in 1919. She did not receive the territorial gains that she had expected. Weakened by internal disputes, she did not raise her voice loudly—though the memorable march of d'Annunzio to Fiume gave Italy the footing on the Adriatic that she had sought. On the opposite shores of the Adriatic is Jugoslavia. Italy

regards her with jealousy. Italy imagines that she herself should be predominant in the Balkans—and indeed in the whole of the Mediterranean: Mare Nostrum, our sea. At the southern end of Jugoslavia is Albania, a little country which forms a little enclave. Now Jugoslavia supposes that she should be the mistress on her own Adriatic shores, and when Italy endeavors to make Albania a sort of protectorate there is great resentment. Italy and Jugoslavia, in short, are like china dogs glaring at each other from either side of the mantelpiece. In the fairy stories of Hans Andersen china dogs could come alive. We must beware lest some night the china figures are converted into dogs of war.

That was the situation when the first Treaty of Tirana was signed by Italy and Albania on November 27, 1926. It authorized the military intervention of Italy in Albania if the political, juridical, or territorial status of Albania was disturbed in any way judged injurious to the reciprocal interests of the two countries. Italy furnished the Albanian army with scores of officers and supplied Albania with munitions and helped Albania to construct strategic roads at the expense of the Italian Treasury. Thus it may fairly be claimed that Italy began this battle of treaties. Yet there was perhaps no real need of continuing the conflict of documents. Jugoslavia, however, was anxious to find an ally, and, on November 11, 1927, France signed a pact which had long been in abeyance. M. Briand has explained that the French Treaty with Jugoslavia is not pointed at Italy, and even that Italy may, if she chooses, make it a three-cornered pact. I have it before me as I write. It is filled with the new formulas; and if one judged it purely from the point of view of terminology, it would be unexceptional. There is in it much about the need of peace, of social progress, of economic prosperity, of political stability, of respect for international engagements, of the framework of the Covenant, of the established order of things, of pacific methods of settling litigation, of friendship and of understanding, of the rulings of the League of Nations, of arbitration, and of conciliation. It is perhaps a model of the fashionable diplomatic language of the day. All this wealth of somewhat meaningless words is not of great practical importance; stripped of these accessories, the treaty declares that the two countries will examine together anything which tends to jeopardize their security or to change the status quo, and if, in spite of their pacific intentions, either of them is attacked without provocation, they will, without delay, decide upon their respective action with a view of safeguarding their legitimate interests, and of maintaining the established order. We are told that these clauses mean exactly nothing. Why, then, put them on paper? The fact is that, in spite of the verbiage, the pact can only be construed as a formal alliance of France and Jugoslavia and, in the event of a clash between Jugoslavia and Italy, France could scarcely refuse to enter into the war.

One of the most brilliant and clear-sighted French diplomatic writers is M. Jacques Bainville. He is generally regarded as a Nationalist—that is to say, a man who is punctilious about French honor and prestige. M. Bainville would defend the treaties with Czechoslovakia and Roumania and Poland because they are intended as bulwarks against Germany, Hungary, and Russia—all potential enemies of France herself. The case of Jugoslavia is entirely different, because Jugoslavia's quarrel is with Italy, in a region where France has no direct and personal interest. Obviously, none of these treaties would be necessary if the peoples really had faith in the League of Nations. But the peculiar character of the Jugoslavian Treaty is that it raises up for France a new possible opponent.

"We have," M. Bainville says, "with

Jugoslavia a treaty of defensive alliance, which resembles politically those of other days. Before 1914, also, all the alliances, even the Triplice, were defensive. One would never have admitted others. Such was our alliance with Russia, and it was because of it that Germany found occasion to declare on us a war for which we had offered no pretext. After having affirmed that Russia was the first to mobilize, Germany summoned France to remain neutral; and so, by alliances, all of them equally defensive, the mechanism of war was set in motion."

This is a startling statement and, although I am convinced that the French are truly pacific, and that M. Briand is perfectly sincere, the logic of M. Bainville's reasoning appears impeccable. It is not sufficient to exclaim, "We are good! We are pure! It is the others who are preparing the war. We only think of peace." He poses brutally the question: What would happen if Italy attacked Jugoslavia? If the Italo-Albanian Treaty is, as is affirmed, an instrument of war, this hypothesis must be considered. His answer is that there cannot be any doubt about the consequences. Unless France chooses to ignore her promises, she will be obliged to declare war on Italy. It may be, however, that the diplomatists think that the guarantee of France will prevent Italy from attacking Jugoslavia. If that be so then we have returned to the old system of rival combinations, of defensive alliances for the purpose of preserving an equilibrium, which, in the past, has proved to be precarious.

V

On November 22, 1927, Italy signed a second pact with Albania. It cannot be said to add greatly to the first pact, but it is more specific, and it is surely meant as a retort to Jugoslavia and France. Italy is blunter in her language than is now the mode in Europe; but bluntness of language is not always to be deprecated. Before the War Germany affected bluntness of language, and when, at the Disarmament and Arbitration Conferences of the Hague, all the Great Powers voted in the same manner, Germany incurred the chief blame because she was franker. Italy, then, agrees with Albania that each country shall show the same zeal in supporting the interests of the other as it would show in supporting its own interests. For twenty years they will employ all their resources in guaranteeing the security of the two states. If conciliatory methods fail, then Italy and Albania will link their fates. Each country will place its financial and military forces at the disposition of the other. Neither of them will seek a truce, an armistice, or peace without a common accord. This treaty certainly intensifies the distrust of Jugoslavia and renders accommodation more difficult. It renders Franco-Italian conversations more onerous. It demonstrates a dangerous mood in Italy, which may easily develop into inveterate hostility.

Mussolini is trying to become the Big Stick of Europe. That is the perilous part that dictators are almost invariably doomed to play. He, too, seeks allies and, it may be, will arrive at a close understanding with Hungary. The Bulgarians are, it is alleged, by the encouragement of Italy, beginning to stir again. The Comitadjis of Macedonia resume their former methods. On the Jugoslavian frontiers there are all kinds of minor troubles provoked by Bulgaria, which is preparing to ask for the revision of the Neuilly Treaty. As for Hungary, she is demanding the revision of the Treaty of Trianon, and will doubtless make the most of the imbroglio produced in Roumania by the disappearance of King Ferdinand and of Bratiano, which leaves the five-year-old Michael on the throne, and the exiled Prince Carol, the father of Michael, making a bid for power. Hungary is finding assistance in unexpected quarters. Lord

Rothermere, in his newspapers, has pleaded the cause of the Hungarians, and at London considerable sympathy is expressed for the Government of Budapest. Meanwhile Austria is seriously demanding the *Anschluss*—her union with Germany—and Germany is seriously demanding the anticipated evacuation of Rhineland. These are the conditions in Central Europe, which, bringing an extraordinary degree of perturbation, appear to be favorable to the ambitions of Italy.

What are those ambitions? Italy, like Germany, is a country with a rapidly increasing population, with a territory which is held to be inadequate. There are doubtless longing eyes cast at Corsica, Nice, and Savoy, which are part of France; but there are probably no serious designs in these directions. Like Germany—and I insist on the common interests of Italy and Germany—Italy has practically no colonies. She is installed in the Tripolitaine in Northern Africa, but that land does not constitute a worth-while possession. In Tunisia, which belongs to France, there are far more Italian settlers than French settlers. In Morocco, which is partly French and partly Spanish, there is the international Port of Tangiers. And at Tangiers three Italian warships, commanded by an Italian prince, cast anchor on October 27th. The visit was described as entirely friendly, but it recalled unpleasantly a similar gesture of the Kaiser Wilhelm. Italy is claiming a foremost part in the administration of Tangiers, on the ground that, as the *Popolo d'Italia* says, "Italy is the most Mediterranean of the Powers, and has the right to discuss the problems of her inland sea at least on a footing of equality. . . . We are forty-two million Italians, and we will soon be fifty millions—a force that is not to be ignored or to be neglected."

Mussolini himself has intimated that the year 1935 will be the critical year. In this connection it is to be especially noted that the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Austen Chamberlain, has visited General Primo de Rivera, the Spanish Dictator, and has also visited Mussolini, the Italian Dictator. The British idea is to keep peace even at the price of concessions, and to act when necessary as a go-between. Behind the scenes there are private conversations which may hereafter be shown to have a high diplomatic significance. Some of the reports which are launched from time to time are apparently baseless. Yet there is no smoke without fire and, though it is entirely unlikely that France, as is suggested, will surrender her mandate in Syria to satisfy Italy, and that Spain will give up territory in Africa to France by way of compensation, there is still a good deal of occult discussion in the chancelleries and fresh combinations among the Mediterranean Powers, of which Spain, France, Italy and, by her hold on Egypt, even England, are the chief leaders.

VI

In Europe to-day there are as many countries as there are cards in a French pack. Now cards can be shuffled in an almost infinite variety of ways. The old diplomacy required tremendous skill. Even the best bridge-player cannot be sure that he will not lose. There is always an unexpected card to be played. For the time being Germany is content to sit back and to make no serious move. One may well wonder, however, what will be the future relations of Germany with that immense country sprawling to the northeast of Europe—limitless Russia, which, though at present under the sway of the Bolsheviks and comparatively powerless, can certainly not be left out of account.

A few years ago it was the custom to imagine that Germany and Russia would work together. That was in the days when Germany appeared to be down and out and was swept by a wave of despair. Since then Germany has shaken off the Russian influence to a

large extent, though there is still in certain developments of German philosophy and letters a strong flavor of Orientalism that has come to the West across the Russian steppes. With certain reservations, one may dismiss the old bogey of a Russo-German Alliance; but it remains true that there are several points of contact, and in the geographical and in the diplomatic sense, Russia and Germany are as close together as any other European countries. They both have grievances against Poland. Poland holds land such as Upper Silesia, such as the Corridor Danzig cutting Prussia in two, which properly belongs to Germany. Poland also holds land on her eastern frontiers which properly belongs to Russia.

Then there are the little states which have been created in the Baltic. These Baltic States, such as Esthonia, such as Latvia, such as Lithuania, interest various countries including Great Britain, but principally do they interest Russia and Germany. Recently we saw the quarrel between Lithuania and Poland brought to a head. Lithuania was made an independent nation by the Paris Peace Conference, with Vilna as its capital. Poland coveted Vilna, and a Polish General, Zeligowski, in 1920, at the head of irregular troops, took possession of Vilna, thus repeating the *coup* of d'Annunzio in Fiume. The League of Nations and the Conference of Ambassadors subsequently rectified the frontier to include Vilna in Polish territory. This has been a long-standing cause of contention and, though Lithuania did not go to war, something like a state of war has existed between Lithuania and Poland for nearly eight years. It is incidents like this which make one inclined to think that the Baltic may become a powder magazine as the Balkans have been a powder magazine for generations.

VII

This is a summary survey of Europe, and many problems, such as the exceedingly important problem of Reparations, have been entirely omitted. Summary as the statement is, it clearly reveals a condition of affairs that calls for the utmost care and, in my opinion, for the revival of the League of Nations in stricter accord with the original conception. I am not pessimistic about the future; but I am persuaded that European problems can never be solved by a reversion to the methods of the old diplomacy. If partial pacts and particular bargains between the statesmen of this and that country were ruled out, and real reliance was placed on Geneva, there would be a surprising amelioration. For my part, I deprecated from the beginning the presence of the Foreign Ministers at Geneva. Most of the friends of the League hailed their coming as a triumph. They thought that their presence would give prestige to the League. In my view, this was a wrong idea of the League's functions. The League was converted into a League of Foreign Offices instead of becoming a League of Peoples. The opportunities of secret conversations were multiplied, and we have seen that the most important negotiations at Geneva are not conducted in the public meetings of the League, but in the private rooms of hotels. There all kinds of combinations are considered, so that Geneva and its environs have become a hotbed of intrigue.

There is a new diplomatic conclave in which is produced the old diplomacy. Senator de Jouvenel resigned because a few big powers had taken command of the League. Lord Cecil resigned because he was disappointed with the progress that was made towards disarmament. Others have been disillusioned because the League authority is not admitted whenever vital questions arise. But no European should, therefore, be discouraged or give up the effort to renew the methods of diplomacy in accordance with the aspirations of the peoples. We should work to influence public opinion, and especially the opinion of the rising

generation that was too young to realize the horrors of the War. We should fortify our resolution to prevent, at all costs, still greater horrors from descending on mankind. It can be done, and it will be done. But it will not be done by idleness and indifference. It will not be done by the old diplomacy which hides behind the League. It will not be done by blind confidence in the mere nominal existence of a League. That League is whatever we choose to make it. It may become a complacent body, afraid of tackling any problem seriously, seeking only to avoid trouble for itself, a duenna who favors and forwards intrigues and flirtations. In that case it will be worse than useless. It will be a positive danger. But it may be a living institution directing the destinies of Europe. In any event, it is for Europeans perpetually to remind themselves that the League is merely a mirror of themselves.

THE KNIGHTS' RETURN

BY MARGARET WIDDEMER

WE have gone riding where the moon was riding,
Now we come back again from very far.
There was no end beyond those bright horizons . . .
Let us hold close the little things that are.

Where the wild banners beat we sang and followed,
Trampling To-day at proud To-morrow's feet:
What was To-morrow that we gave all for her?
Only To-day less young, less fierce and sweet!

There was a Grail, men said. . . . We have not found it.
There was a Quest. . . . Yet small earth things are fair.
There are red flowers low among the grasses,
There is a wind at dusk that lifts our hair.

HOW GOOD IS PRIMITIVE MUSIC?

BY SIGMUND SPAETH

IN THAT perpetual renaissance which serves as a literal recreation for the æsthetically overfed, the current emphasis is on the glorification of the primitive. Music, of all the arts, lends itself most easily to such a "back to nature" movement, for its intangibility permits unlimited theorizing, and its concrete examples may be used to prove almost anything.

By a curious twist of circumstance, the exponents of the most advanced and complicated tonal mazes have persuaded themselves (and to some extent their public as well) that primitive music by nature contained complexities similar to those now produced through such labored and painstaking sophistication, not to speak of an absolute and ethical significance never since duplicated.

The ultra-modernist of music delights in reminding us that the Chinese scale contains more tones than the keyboard of the civilized piano, that the ancient Greeks knew musical intervals which the modern world fails to recognize, and that the veriest savage sings in quarter-tones and less, with unlimited complexities of rhythm besides. Scholarly pioneers, armed with a recording phonograph, have from time to time gone out among primitive tribes, seeking what cacophonies they might devour. They have transcribed the results in the terms of conventional music, so far as possible, indicating notes which lay closer together than those of the chromatic scale, and faithfully marking every irregularity of rhythm, as 5–4, 7–8, or what not. This interest in primitive music has now reached a point where it is generally accepted that all ancient scales contained more tones than are clearly distinguishable by the modern ear, and that this increased range somehow represents a music superior to that of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms, not to speak of the vastly greater possibilities of rhythmic irregularity.

The truth of the matter seems to be that primitive people, like all children, sing and play out of tune and out of time. The much vaunted sense of rhythm possessed by savages is mostly a myth and, granting that the primitives, like all other musical illiterates, do sing and play quarter-tones and even smaller intervals, there is no way of proving that they do this intentionally or that they are aware of the musical significance of the result. They are aiming instinctively at the intervals which create a common response in all mankind, but their ears are bad, and so they seldom if ever strike them exactly. The enthusiastic musical scholar, however, hearing the subjects of his researches producing noises which are always slightly out of tune, immediately and with great avidity credits them with an absolute command of infinitesimal intervals and shakes his head mournfully over the decadence of a generation which satisfies itself with a scale of only twelve different tones.

When even a trained ear finds it difficult to distinguish much beyond the traditional interval of a half-tone (except to say in a general and rather vague fashion that it is "a little high" or "a little low") why should obviously untrained ears be credited with such super-

human powers? The myth of racial musical ability is just about due to be knocked into a cocked hat. The simple fact is that every race contains some individuals of musical talent and others who are by nature debarred from successful performance, and the musical achievements of each race depend upon the habits that are developed and the encouragement that is given to individual geniuses.

The writer had a startling lesson in folk-music in connection with the great "Fair of the Iron Horse" in Baltimore not long ago. For this pageant a troop of Indians was sent down from the Northwest, and these primitive people presented their music on every possible occasion. The entire company included exactly four men who were recognized by their fellows as musicians to the extent that they could beat time with a drum and give some sort of pitch to a song. The rest were utterly unable to keep time, even in the simplest kind of a step, and their voices seldom even approximated what the leaders were singing.

The stock rhythm of this group of Indians was not the monotonously regular beat generally associated with the tom-tom, but alternating long and short beats, such as would be represented by a 3–4, 3–8, or 6–8 time in written music. The first note always had the accent, representing actually the first two beats in a group of three. The dance to this rhythm consisted of a mere "walk-around" in a circle, with arms locked, the dancers coming down heavily on one foot and then lightly on the other. It was noticeable that the white people who joined the circle caught this rhythm without any difficulty, and actually kept better time than the general run of their red brethren. As for the songs, they suggested no definiteness of pitch whatever, and were all of precisely the same character. There was a general agreement in the fact that the voices went up at certain spots and down at others, but beyond this there were only faint suggestions of unanimity of purpose, practically no melodic unison and, of course, not a trace of harmony.

In the same pageant an attempt was made to secure a negro quartet from among the employees of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. A combing of the entire force developed only three adequate voices, of which only one could sing with anything like real volume or accuracy, regardless of tonal quality. Yet the assumption still persists that all negroes are by nature musical. (Incidentally, the B. & O. Glee Club of white men is an excellent chorus.)

The fact is that the negro race has its full share of musical talent, and the naturally rich voice of the black man perhaps produces in a singer a more individual and interesting quality of tone than would be the case with an equally gifted singer of the French or English race. But to argue that the negroes are, therefore, consistently better singers than the French or English would be absurd.

The music of India is perhaps as elaborate as any in the world in the subtle and complex associations built around its materials. Yet the materials themselves are deadly dull and frightfully monotonous after the first impression of novelty has worn off. All such Oriental music can be made temporarily effective by careful showmanship and exotic staging, particularly if all the hidden meanings and mystical traditions have been clearly pointed out in advance. But its direct appeal is exceedingly limited beyond the circle of the faithful initiates.

There are Oriental wind instruments which produce weird noises, piercing in quality, and certainly not in tune with the civilized scale. But it may have been noted that all bad performers on the clarinet, oboe, etc. produce similar noises merely because they are unable to keep to a definite pitch or to control a pleasing tone.

When Ross Gorman played the opening measures of George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" on his trick clari-

net, he slid like a calliope up a wailing glissando which most trained players would have found literally impossible, but which represented the deliberate imitation of the savage's imperfect command of intervals and hence the accidental discovery of tones smaller even than a quarter or an eighth. What Gorman did purposely, by a modification of the conventional reed, the illiterate player of primitive music has always achieved, accidentally, but with blissful unconsciousness of any departure from conventional paths.

The "close harmony" of a negro quartet is gained by tentative searchings and experimental wanderings of the voices, which, while often slightly out of tune, create all the greater satisfaction when they slide successfully into a chord that actually makes sense. In fact, all dissonances in music serve a legitimate purpose chiefly in emphasizing the satisfying qualities of recognized chords and intervals.

II

The more primitive the race, the easier it is for its artists to impose upon the average mind a foregone æsthetic or ethical conclusion. When the Indian medicine-man decreed "This is a war dance," or "This is of religious significance," or "This has to do with the harvest" his word was law, and the music permanently assumed this artificial significance.

Greek literature is full of references to the absolute power of certain scales and intervals to produce certain inevitable effects, particularly of an ethical nature. The Doric mode, for instance, which is nothing but a modified scale of D minor, is cited by Plato and other writers as guaranteed to create courage and high moral purpose in its hearers, and its music is consistently recommended for leading young men into war.

Unquestionably, there is an inspiring quality in the tones of certain instruments, such as the trumpet, but to credit each interval of the scale with an ethical significance seems hardly logical. The few examples of Greek music which have come down to us are absolutely at variance with the literary accounts of their significance. Their melodies are crude and incoherent; they show no originality of rhythmic pattern and only a limited conception of harmony.

But it is quite easy for the Greek musician to have argued, as the ultra-modernist argues, that certain effects have an absolute significance which should be quite clear to every listener. If the musical expressionist strikes clusters of tones at random and labels these with all kinds of abstract titles, who shall argue with him? We can only say that his music does not mean to us what it evidently means to its composer. But the final test of all art is its ability to transfer the emotions of its creator directly to some sort of audience. If this were not so, then any child beating upon the keyboard of a piano could well claim to be expressing abstract feelings of joy, and any vandal flinging a pot of paint at a canvas could label the result a study in animal energy. This perfectly simple criterion of appreciation is consistently overlooked by the half-baked enthusiasts of modernism, who take the word of any æsthetic charlatan as to his intentions and hypocritically agree that what they are observing is Art with a capital A.

Unquestionably, traditions have grown up about certain pieces of music which have helped them to produce absolute effects, ethical and otherwise. And there was something more than mere tradition in the response of various Frenchmen to the "Marseillaise," "Ça ira" and the "Carmagnole." "Dixie" has more reasons for its popularity than the mere habit of applause and cheers. On the other hand, is there anything essentially touching in the melody of "Home, Sweet Home," which Robert Louis Stevenson described as "wallowing naked in the pathetic"? Is it not rather a matter of association which has similarly glorified the ribald strains of that

old English drinking song, "To Anacreon in Heaven," into the dignified national anthem, "The Star Spangled Banner"?

Lullabies of every kind have consistently put babies to sleep the world over, and "Frankie and Johnnie" would probably be quite as effective for the purpose as "Hush-a-by My Darling," "The Sandman," or any other jingle made potent by association. Bugle calls in the army acquire such a definite significance that even horses respond to them. Practically all sacred music is rooted in a similarly didactic tyranny. College and school songs have their fixed traditions, and once these are thoroughly drilled into the students there is no escape from their absolute import. There are occasions when it would be rank heresy to sing "Old Nassau" or "Bright College Years"; and Yale's exact timing of the famous "undertaker" song has actually turned defeat into victory by the mere force of psychology. Princeton and Harvard men are as fearful of that portentous, long-drawn note as the veriest voodoo-worshippers, and hysterically try to drown it out with their own noise whenever it floats across the gridiron.

Since practically all "program" music secures its effects by prearrangement, it is all the more to the credit of a composer when he creates, by "absolute" means, a mood of practical inevitability. This has actually been accomplished again and again by all the truly great musicians of the world in the ineffable calm of their symphonic slow movements, in the rhapsodic utterance of a Finale, in the joyous lilt of a Scherzo, without recourse to words, program, or label of any kind. When the listener hears such music he is never in doubt as to his response. It was Fritz Kreisler who said, with homely truth, "After all, you know it is great art only when it raises goose-flesh."

Unfortunately, the more difficult it is to produce these absolute effects and reactions, the easier it is to announce them in advance. In general it has been a rule that the composer with the most elaborate intentions has been the least able to carry them out.

The evolution of music, with its unswerving fidelity to the law of the survival of the fittest, has emphasized the instinctive response of human nature to certain combinations of tone, and these combinations seem to rest upon purely physical grounds. It can no longer be questioned that art is fundamentally utilitarian, and we normally and logically ascribe beauty to that which is primarily comfortable and convenient.

Thus the eye responds to shapes and colors that do not put an undue strain upon it and tolerates clashing dissonances only in so far as they emphasize the restfulness of customary combinations. Thus also the ear finds pleasure in sounds that represent universal habits and are, therefore, easy to grasp and literally painless. Shrill, raucous, scratching sounds, as well as tones pitched too high or too low for comfort, are displeasing to the ear for merely physical reasons.

There is a rule of physics that regular vibration produces musical tone, while irregular vibration produces noise. This axiom is inevitably recognized by even untrained ears, and quite unconsciously. Even the scientist is unable to count and analyze vibrations except with the aid of special paraphernalia, but his ear is just as sure as that of the layman whether it is responding to organized or unorganized tone.

Concerning identity of pitch there is usually little argument, and practically every human ear is unerringly aware of musical unison. The interval of the octave is almost as sure to be recognized universally (even though the hearer may not be able to explain his reaction to its peculiar effect of duplicating the tone that is actually twelve half-steps removed from it) and the perfect fifth and fourth are not far behind in their general appeal.

The rest of the chromatic scale is frankly a matter of habit, which has

assumed its present form after much experiment, with convenience to the ear again the primary consideration. But the interval of the third, even though not quite accurately pitched, from the standpoint of physics, has acquired the significance of universality by custom (it was considered a discord by the Greeks) and now seems a necessary mediant between the first (tonic) and fifth (dominant) steps of the scale.

The natural production of these tones in such an instrument as the bugle, their presence among the overtones of every individual tone, and the complete satisfaction which they give in the combination of the perfect major chord would seem to argue something more than an accidental or a dogmatically forced relationship. Men who are utterly unaware of these universal properties nevertheless respond to them involuntarily; and when they do not consciously find these natural intervals they try intuitively to approximate them.

All primitive music, therefore, can be set down fairly accurately in terms of the civilized, tempered scale and conventional rhythms. Where the actual results do not agree with these ideals it is merely because of physical and mental inability to carry out obvious and almost inevitable intentions. The habit of singing and playing out of time and out of tune is too common even among the musically literate to be considered foreign to the most naïve exponents of the art. The average person singing such a tune as "Old Folks at Home" is quite likely to cut off one or two beats at the end of each musical sentence merely because the sense of rhythm loses track while a long note is being sustained. In the transcribing of primitive music such aberrations have been solemnly put down as irregularities of rhythm, with measures of 3–4 and 2–4 time suddenly and unreasonably inserted in the midst of an obvious 4–4 beat. Similarly, certain intervals have been supplied with footnotes to the effect that they should be sung "a little higher" or "a little lower" than the note indicated, with the transcribers evidently quite oblivious to the fact that this was the very note at which the original singers must have been unconsciously aiming.

The writer recently edited a book of American Mountain Songs, and in the course of this work he was obliged to take down many melodies directly from the singers, or to correct those which had already been awkwardly and incorrectly transcribed. Invariably when he put down a conventional version of what the music was obviously intended to convey, he would find the singer in complete agreement with this version. "That's it! That's what I meant!" was usually the answer to his own repetition of the tune, done in the orthodox manner.

Gid Tanner, the Georgia fiddler and singer, has actually made phonograph records in which both his sense of pitch and his sense of rhythm have slipped quite noticeably here and there. These slips are accepted as charming touches of naïveté. But why credit this mountaineer with the command of a special scale or the invention of original rhythmic patterns?

III

The folly of this whole procedure extends beyond the field of music into those of painting, sculpture and even literature. There are artists who deliberately imitate the "primitive's" lack of technic and intentionally ignore correctness of line and perspective as well as fidelity of color. There are writers who refuse to consider the requirements of the reader and merely set down stupidly and inartistically their incoherent thoughts and words, as a child might scrawl meaningless lines upon a piece of paper.

To admire simplicity of expression and unconscious art where the limits of technic are obvious is something quite different from discarding the equipment gradually gathered through a long period of logical development and deliberately

returning to a primitive ignorance of such equipment.

There has been entirely too much readiness to credit primitive art with æsthetic beauty instead of the mere historic interest which it obviously possesses. This mistake is made in most textbooks. The symphonies of Brahms are neglected in order that the earliest musical instruments may be thoroughly described. Great literature has to be content with a passing mention because of the space devoted to hieroglyphics, cuneiform inscriptions, etc. The crude drawings of cave-dwellers are treated with as much reverence as a portrait by Rembrandt. Even in biography the finest achievements of the hero are often subjected to a perfunctory summary after valuable pages have been expended upon trivial details of childhood and youth.

There are unquestionably climaxes of art, beyond which no achievement is imaginable. Greek sculpture has not yet been improved upon, nor is modern painting necessarily better than the more photographic work of Raphael and other masters of several centuries ago. The ancient temples and medieval cathedrals still stand as monuments of a perfect architecture before which most of the later buildings of the world must bow in shame.

But with an art of such gradual and logical development as music, it seems folly to presuppose climaxes of which history and experience alike give no proof whatever. It is perhaps true that no greater symphonies will ever be written than those of Brahms. It may be that Wagner has sounded the limits of music drama. But these achievements were the normal result of a long and slow growth, as was the organ music of Bach and the piano music of Chopin. Why discount all these lines of development for the sake of assuming independently a purely imaginary and utterly illogical skill?

The Stradivarius family long ago made the finest violins conceivable, but does that argue that hundreds of years before their time there were still finer stringed instruments?

Music is an art whose very existence assumes the human equation. There is no musical beauty without a human ear to perceive it. Is it logical to suppose that primitive, untrained, inexperienced ears could demand and receive a music that was actually superior to that of the long line from Palestrina and Bach to Strauss and Stravinsky?

A little serious thought on the part of the ultra-modern "primitives" will persuade them that they do not wish to be taken as seriously as this. Perhaps they would even admit that they do not consider their own music superior to that of Bach. Fundamentally, they are merely trying to justify, as art, experiments which thus far seem to have a scientific rather than an æsthetic value. It is interesting to know how many different kinds of noises can be made by human beings, but this knowledge does not necessarily contribute to universal beauty.

The primitive musician has been dragged into the limelight chiefly to prove that the artificial achievements of ultra-modernism are founded upon the truth of human experience. What is actually revealed, however, is an honest but futile groping for those very formulas that the modernist has discarded as "old-fashioned," an intuitive search for natural laws of melody, harmony, and rhythm, whose proper interpretation required the genius of the musical masters, and whose permanence and universal necessity no capricious distortion or fantastic experimentation has yet been able to affect.

WHY THEY FAILED TO MARRY

BY KATHARINE BEMENT DAVIS

"I WISH I knew," writes a forty-six-year-old woman journalist in reply to a question as to her reasons for not marrying. "If there could be such a thing, I should say I was 'marked' for spinsterhood. I think marriage is always best where possible, but, although eight fine men have proposed, not one of them appealed." One of a family of twelve children, brought up by a mother "who taught us to face things and conquer them," this woman is now teaching a motherless thirteen-year-old nephew "the things he should have learned years ago." "He cries and resents it, but I tell him it is like winds and waves, grain growing, ocean currents, radio—just life's interesting fact."

A sane woman from her paper and, reading it, one also wonders why.

From the time, more than sixty years ago, when college doors were thrown open to women, the opinion has been rather widely prevalent that a college education is detrimental to a woman's matrimonial chances. Answers from a relatively large group of unmarried college women may tell us what part, if any, in their own failure to marry they believe was played by their academic training.

Geneticists are pointing out the danger to the race if inferior stocks go on reproducing their kind in increasing proportions while the birthrate of the better stocks is declining. The various schools of eugenics may not yet know, and certainly do not yet agree, as to the *how* and *what* of the transmission by human beings to their offspring of various characteristics, physical and mental. But the layman going to agricultural fairs and flower shows does not need to be convinced that there is something in heredity, and that it is a good thing to pass on goodness and beauty. Heredity must be at least as important to humans as it is to plants and animals.

On the other hand, psychiatrists and students of child behavior are stressing increasingly the importance of environment, particularly to the young child. His whole future life, his happiness or misery, his success or failure hinge, they tell us, on the surroundings of the first few years. Some go so far as to maintain that his behavior patterns are irrevocably fixed in the pre-school period.

Be that as it may, again the layman believes in the importance of environment. Far be it from me to maintain that the college woman invariably comes from the better, more desirable stock. So far as I know, no study has been made which would give us data for such an opinion. Observation and acquaintance with many college women for many years lead me to believe, however, that on the whole the families from which they come are of the better type, representing better than the average health and intelligence. Great economic efficiency resulting in wealth, and the type of intellect that produces genius, are not necessary ingredients in the type of families which it is socially desirable to reproduce.

From the point of view of eugenics I shall maintain until it is otherwise proven that it would be a good thing for the race if a higher per cent of our college women were to marry and produce children. In the matter of ability to furnish

a proper environment for her offspring, the argument for the motherhood of college women can safely, it seems to me, be made even stronger than for heredity.

One of my college professors, a woman, used to say that a girl could not graduate from Vassar and be a complete fool unless she had a perfect genius for it. A young woman who has been trained for four years in habits of observation, reasoning, deduction, and adaptation to other people *ought* to be able to adjust herself to the requirements of home making, to getting on with her husband, and to learning the latest on the subject of child hygiene, physical and mental, better than one not so trained. There are, of course, exceptions.

Accurate statistics of marriages among college women are not available.

An analysis of the sociological returns at various dates from the alumnæ of a considerable number of both co-educational and women's colleges shows that about fifty per cent of the women graduates marry, that the differences of percentage between the two types of institutions are not great enough to be significant, and that there is a slow increase in the percentage of marriages. There is not conclusive evidence that there is more than chance in the fact that in a few selected localities where the number of men exceed the women there is a slightly higher percentage of marriages.

II

The reasons most commonly given for failure of college women to marry are, first: During four of the most important years girls are removed from the society of eligible young men. This is partially true if they attend a woman's college. Second: They either enter college with a desire for a career or during their college course become fired with some specific enthusiasm. Third: Having received more than the non-college woman in the way of training of powers of observation and reason, they are more likely to be critical of men and less likely to fall in love blindly. Fourth: Being prepared to earn an honest livelihood, they need not marry for support. Fifth: The type of girl who attends college is likely to be personally unbeautiful, unattractive, and dowdy. Sixth: Men as a class do not care to marry women who may prove to be their intellectual equals or superiors. Probably there is a certain amount of truth in each of these contentions. It is doubtful if any careful study has ever been made as to the truth of any of them. Perhaps none can ever be made. Certainly, the last two reasons given do not lend themselves easily to statistical surveys.

But resorting to "straws," it was reported recently that a foreign musician having given a concert at one of our eastern women's colleges was being shown the campus and buildings. As they passed a group of jolly, laughing girls, he turned to his escort and remarked, "Are *all* your college girls so pretty? Are there no homely college girls in America?" Of course it may be answered that this article is dealing with a past generation, not the present!

New Student News Service is sponsor for the statement that "two professors at the University of California have completed a study of the comparative matrimonial advantages of the 'dumb' and bright girls, and their conclusions show the grades of the married students to be a shade higher than of the unmarried," and the holders of Phi Beta Kappa keys are equally divided between married and single women.

As to the validity of other reasons generally cited for failure of college women to marry, let a group of unmarried college women speak for themselves. Those speaking are twelve hundred women from whose answers to a questionnaire on the sex life of the normal unmarried college graduate out of college for at least five years this material is taken.

In the group are eight hundred and thirteen graduates of women's colleges; three hundred and thirty-five of co-edu-

cational colleges or universities; forty-eight who did undergraduate work at both; and five who did not answer as to type of college. Two hundred and thirty-four have the M.A., and thirteen the M.S. degree; sixty are Ph.D.'s, and thirty-two are M.D.'s. There is one LL.B. and one diploma of the Sorbonne in the group. In age the range is from two infant phenomena who entered college at 13, graduated at 17, and were 22 at time of reply, to one woman of 68. The mode is 30, and the average age 36.8. Twenty-one per cent are under thirty, and 46.2 per cent are from 30 to 39 years of age.

There are 77.1% of the entire group who report good or excellent health at time of reply, and 78.3% who call themselves happy. (Sixty-eight failed to answer this question.) Only 81 individuals declared that they were actively unhappy. The others were neutral or "fairly happy."

Only 53 of the entire number have never been gainfully employed. Occupationally, as might be anticipated, the educational group is far in the lead with 617 individuals, including several deans of colleges, college professors and instructors, principals of public and private schools, one city superintendent of schools, and teachers all along the line to kindergartners. Social service in its various forms comes next with 120 representatives; professional women 60, with medicine in the lead; librarians 52, business women 43, secretarial and clerical workers 79; and then in decreasing numbers practically every occupation open to women.

Of these, 65.1 per cent express the belief that they are successful. Another smaller percentage say, "Other people call me so," while the remainder are ready to admit that they have not reached the goal of success.

On the whole, we have here a highly educated, busy, healthy, happy, and fairly successful group of women, more or less trained to express themselves in writing, 1077 of whom have told us why from their own point of view they have never married.

One hundred and twenty-three of our total (1200) failed to answer the first of the following group of questions:

(a) Will you give the reasons why you have not married?
(b) Do you regret that you have not married? Why?
(c) Have you ever been engaged?
(d) Are you engaged now?
(e) Do you expect to marry if you meet the right man?

Table I shows the reasons of the 1077 who answered. So far as is possible, we have refrained from interpretation, but in many cases it has been necessary to sum up in a phrase the gist of a longer answer. When there was any question as to where an answer should go, it has been settled by the combined wisdom of the five of us who are working on our questionnaires.

Over and over in studying and classifying the reasons I have wished that instead of anonymous replies I had names and addresses and the power to summon before me the women who had written the papers, and having them in my office had the ability to secure the "transference" so much talked of by psychoanalysts and, in addition, had the knowledge so to examine them as to get behind the face value of the returns.

Some of them do not need any particular getting behind. Such, for example, as ill-health, financial family obligations of either party, and the cases of the nineteen young women who are engaged now and never in love before. The largest number, three hundred and five, say in substance they never met the right man. A good many of these have been engaged, many have had proposals. None of them cites lack of opportunity to meet men, ill-health, dislike of the marriage relation, or any obvious reasons given by others. If we knew all about them, probably some of them would be classified with the fourteen who admit they were too particular, critical, or cautious. But we could not stop there.

TABLE I

REASONS FOR FAILURE TO MARRY

REASONS	NUMBER	PER CENT
1. Never met the right man	305	28.3
2. In love with man she could not marry	97	9.0
3. Was never in love with any man	89	8.2
4. "No one ever asked me"	55	5.1
5. Engagement broken—never loved another	54	5.1
6. Lack of opportunity to meet men	52	4.8
7. Childhood conditioning	36	3.3
8. Fiancé died—never loved another	33	3.1
9. Financial (family) obligations of woman	31	2.8
10. Too shy—not attractive to men	22	2.0
11. Desire for a career	22	2.0
12. "Never loved men who asked and men I loved never asked"	21	1.9
13. Was never asked—never wanted to be asked	19	1.7
14. Engaged now. Never in love before	19	1.7
15. Financial (family) obligations of man	18	1.6
16. Homo-sexual relations prevented	17	1.6
17. Ill health of woman	17	1.6
18. No desire to marry—marriage never appealed	18	1.6
19. Too particular, critical or cautious	14	1.2
20. Parental objections to particular man	13	1.2
21. Could not love men who asked	12	1.1
22. Sex relations distasteful	9	.8
23. Desire for freedom	8	.7
24. Mother's advice against marriage in general	7	.6
25. Sex intercourse with man who could not marry prevented marriage with anyone else	4	.4
26. Ill health of fiancé	3	.3
27. Fear of child bearing	3	.2
28. Special cases—several reasons	33	3.1
29. Reasons given each by a single individual	49	4.6
TOTAL	1077	99.5

Why were they too particular, critical, or cautious? Was this the result of "childhood conditioning" or of their college training? Did caution "run in the family," as one woman says spinsters do in hers?

One of this group feels it is just chance that keeps the right man out of her way. She, in common with a good many others, will marry if he comes.

"Was never asked—never wanted to be asked," say nineteen. Perhaps the second phrase explains the first, but *why* didn't they want to be asked? That would obviously get us nearer to the real reason of failure to marry.

Eighteen women say they have no desire to marry. "Marriage never appealed." *Why* doesn't it appeal?

The fifty-five who were never asked do not give us any clue as to what in their judgment was the deterring cause of this backwardness on the part of their men friends. In brief, we could go over the entire list of reasons with why? why? why? Nothing short of careful individual study could get behind the alleged causes, so obviously we must go on from here unsatisfied, awaiting further exhaustive personality studies which one day undoubtedly will be made of normal as we now have them of abnormal women.

Next on the list to the 305 who never met the right man is a group of ninety-seven women who fell in love with men they could not marry. Some of them were on the active list at the time of reporting. All but one of them tell why. "He is already married," 29 cases. "He does not reciprocate," 24 cases. "He died," 10 cases. "He married another," 7 cases. Differences in race and religion, 3 cases. Unexplained "circumstances separated," 4 cases. "Differences in personality and social status," and "He was not a college man" (the women felt it would make for unhappiness), two cases each. "He was unable to marry," unexplained; and, "He was found to be sexually promiscuous," 3 cases each. Eight reasons are given by

TABLE II

	Do you regret not having married?		*Were you ever engaged?*		*Are you engaged now?*		*Do you expect to marry if you meet the right man?*	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	559	52.0	339	31.2	86	7.0	752	67.9
Perhaps							157	14.1
Sometimes	144	13.4	....	.....	....	.....		
No	371	34.6	745	68.8	1012	93.0	197	18.0
Total answers	1074	100.0	1084	100.0	1098	100.0	1106	100.0
Unanswered	126		116		102		94	
TOTAL	1200		1200		1200		1200	

one person each, such as "misunderstanding," "he proved untrustworthy," "he was divorced and lied about it," etc., etc.

Table II shows that 339 of the women have been engaged and 86 were engaged at the time of reporting.

In Table I, we find that in thirty-three cases the fiancé had died and love had never come again. In three cases his ill-health had prevented marriage. In 54 cases the engagement was broken and the women "never loved another." In these 54 cases the reason for the breaking of the engagement is given as follows:

TABLE III

REASONS FOR BREAKING OF ENGAGEMENT

1. Jilted by fiancé	8
2. Fiancé did not measure up to standard	9
3. Fiancé married someone else	3
4. Fiancé wanted too much physical play	3
5. Incompatibility	3
6. Quarrels	4
7. Differences in religion	2
8. Engagement terminated disastrously (unexplained)	7
9. Family reasons on his side (interference of his mother in one case)	2
10. Fiancé decided he was too old to marry	1
11. Fiancé was unfaithful	1
12. Insanity in his family	1
13. War experiences clouded mind of fiancé	1
14. She feared her emotions would not last	1
15. She tired of him—too long engagement	1
16. She found she did not love him enough	1
17. She loved him too well and showed it too plainly	1
18. She made a foolish choice of a younger unprincipled man	1
19. "A man sexually aroused is abhorrent."	1
20. "Fate intervened" (unexplained)	1
21. "Various reasons" "	1
22. "I broke it." "	1
	54

The completed table of reasons brought two surprises. Only 22 women gave "desire for a career" as the one reason for not marrying, though it was mentioned as one of the reasons in several cases where more than one was named.

Fifty-two women gave "lack of opportunity to meet men," as the one cause. In a considerable number of these cases the woman graduated at a co-educational college or university. Several stated that the lack of opportunity came from entering the teaching profession in a strange town with no social connections.

A number engaged in various forms of business said that, though they met men daily in a business way, there were no social opportunities. These balance the women who have fallen in love with married men, their employers, or business associates. On the whole, the number in these two groups was surprisingly

small in view of the often expressed opinion as to the responsibility of these two factors in producing spinsters.

The group of thirty-six who have been listed as prevented from marrying by "childhood conditioning" offers good illustrations of the importance of early environment. A few themselves use the phrase "childhood conditioning." Most of them tell something of the circumstances, as for example, a woman physician of thirty-one, graduate of a woman's college, who writes: "I think I have a strong homo-sexual tendency and that the women I have loved have satisfied my need for affection and companionship." Had she stopped here, we should undoubtedly have classified her among those whose homo-sexual experiences prevented marriage, but she goes on: "My mother and my college president roused and stimulated my sex antagonism. As a child and young girl I hated my father and his attitude toward my mother. This feeling my mother unconsciously fostered, and I decided that all men were alike and marriage had nothing for me. I was at least twenty-eight or twenty-nine years old before I realized what this attitude meant and its cause, and at that age one is too old to experiment. I have never been attractive to men. No man has even been in love with me. I want very much to be married and am sorry that my earlier viewpoint was so warped both by my mother and the ardent feminist attitude of the older unmarried woman who influenced me during my college life."

This is from a college teacher of thirty-eight: "Until six years ago marriage seemed to me something ugly. Until then I had never known two really happy married people. As a child, I was severely frightened by the unhappiness of my parents." For the past six years this woman has had a very unhappy love life. She is now confronted with the problem of sex relations without marriage. She wants a child badly.

Still another: "My mother, who had a number of children, succeeded in drying up sex in several of us from a combination of unconscious dread of it and old-fashioned morality and prudishness."

A graduate of a co-educational university, aged thirty-two, writes: "I was not trained to plan for marriage. I was given false information which led to suppression of sex instincts. I was taught to avoid dancing, spooning, and all personal contacts. I am considered successful and happy, but I am putting up a bluff."

Another writes: "This is hard to tell, but I think the chief reason is that I saw great unhappiness in my own home between my parents. At times they did not speak to each other, but always a good front was put up and even intimate friends thought it a happy household. My sympathies were with my mother. At the same time my closest playmate as a child and young girl from eight years to eighteen or twenty was the child of a widow of comfortable means. Her home seemed heaven in its peace and happiness. I spent a great deal of time there. From my earliest recollections, from three or four years of age, I associated trouble with my father, though he has always been devoted and most loving to me, and is an extremely lovable person. I particularly came to associate happiness with my chum's manless household. The unhappiness in my own home increased, and a resolve gradually grew up in me not to let myself grow fond of any boy, for fear of getting into the unhappy situation my mother was in. Only once was it difficult to hold to this, only once was I strongly attracted to a man. I have lived away from the strain of my parents' home for ten years and have gained perspective—and see the old troubles with a juster eye, and see fault on both sides. Therefore, some sympathy has come this late for my father too. Some of the old antagonism for men has gone as I have become more sympathetic with my father, and succeeding years of course have softened the hardness of youth. I do not believe that the indifference and coldness that I built

up as a shield has been thrown off, however."

Included in this group are several instances of what the psychiatrists would call "father fixation," as in the case of the woman who gives as her reason for not marrying, "devotion to an ideal father"; and another who has "been waiting to find as fine a man as my father."

And as a final illustration of influences during childhood, we give the experiences of an older woman who says she grew up with the sense that certain things were bad. She early learned to indulge in auto-erotic practices. She became morbid as she grew older, largely on this account. She blames her parents for lack of oversight, for not gaining her confidence, and for lack of proper instruction. She always preferred girls to boys. She sums up with a statement that very well expresses the attitude of many of the older women toward the type of "college crush" that is not carried to extremes. "In college, maturing, there was a constant finding of congenial spirits, with considerable expression of affection by kissing and embracing. It seemed of the spirit rather than of the flesh, and I remember being very much offended at a girl who said it was not love. I felt that marriage was not for me, because I might carry on to children the bad tendencies that had appeared in my own childhood. But of these things I never spoke to anyone. Men either did not attract me at all naturally, or I was so inhibited that all the tenderness in me went out to girls and women. In those days we had no knowledge of such matters, and while some things may be eternally and immutably sex manifestations, to the ones who found in them the natural expressions of love for others, they *were* such expressions, not sex perversions, it seems to me, however sentimental such a view may be called by the scientific mind. I incline to wager that the future scientist will find some attributes *human*, belonging to both sexes, that are now gummed up with Freudian terms."

Last winter the presentation of the play, "The Captive," and the discussion which followed, focused the attention of the public upon the problem of homosexuality which before that time had never been made a topic of conversation in polite society. Many adults, particularly women, claimed they did not know such a condition existed. In answer to the question as to why she had failed to marry, 17 women replied that it was due to their relations with other women; but in another section of the questionnaire dealing with "intense emotional relations with other girls or women," 22 women stated that this relationship had been one influence in causing them to remain single, while 41 others stated that it was possibly a factor.

Among the reasons each given by one person are the following: "The real reason is my own selfishness." "The nicest men are already married." Agrees with St. Paul that "he who marrieth not doeth better." She adds: "I have no more interest in sex than in leprosy." "I never stayed in love long enough." From a young psychiatric social worker: "Indifference due to repression." And finally, the statement of a woman who says of herself: "I am rather an extreme case of the type of woman who does not marry." She writes: "I really don't know why, for after all, it isn't quite conclusive to say no one has asked me. My guess is that the reasons are physiologic, psychologic, sociologic, and economic." "After a fashion," she regrets not having married and believes that even yet if the right man appeared she might say "yes." She goes on: "The marriage relation and institution are such a mess; I consider the institution in a chaotic transitional state. I hate to miss any life experience, yet I'd probably have driven my husband to drink or loathed the humdrum."

The thirty-three women who give more than one reason are interesting because probably they approach the truth more nearly than many of those who give only one. There follow a few of these replies:

A graduate of a woman's college, age forty-two, engaged in most healthful and absorbing work, and who is both healthy and happy, writes: "Perhaps an early distorted view of sex life gotten from girl playmates gave a subconscious repulsion to marriage. I was never in love. Other reasons are love of my home, which is unique and beautiful, my mother's need of care, and the desirability of my management of family property."

A teacher of thirty says: "First, ambitious parents pushed me to give my whole attention to school and college work so that I had no time to play with boys before I went to college. My parents kept me at home very strictly. Second, I was isolated for four years at a woman's college. Summers were spent at camp with girls. Third, when I came out of college, I was shy in the presence of men. Also, since I had learned about prostitution, I felt physically awkward with men. Fourth, I began to be successful in my profession (teaching). Personal ambition prevented marriage. Since I was twenty-eight, however (she is now thirty), I have had less personal ambition and more eagerness for motherhood But I find that the men who are congenial are already married, and often to very stupid women. Sometimes I feel rather bitter about this."

In both of these cases influences of childhood and adolescence were at work to prevent marriage.

In the following case the "father fixation" motive appears. "My reasons for failure to marry are: First, an unusually happy home and a devoted sister. Second, I have no desire to marry for the sake of marrying. The right man did not appear and I would marry no other. Third, I wanted to find as fine a man as my father."

Three concise replies are as follows: The first one, "Bashful, critical of most men; not very attractive to men; devoted to my family; too busy." The second, "No opportunity to meet men; family responsibilities; absorbing professional life"; and the third, "I have always been afraid of boys and men. As a young girl the woman I thought the most of preached the doctrine of woman's independence of man. Later, I saw the disasters of married life."

And there is the tale of a woman teacher who has been engaged three times. The first time her parents opposed it. He went away, and she grew away from him chiefly because she realized that she could not endure the hardship and poverty that would result if she persisted in marrying him. Next she was engaged to a widower with children who interfered and succeeded in breaking up the match. The third was the real love of her life. He was married. She was his wife's friend. She loves him still.

Lastly, there is a reply which might be transcribed in verse form:

> "I have a good job;
> I earn a good living;
> I am contented and happy;
> Why be encumbered?"

This reminded me of something I tried for some time to remember. Finally I got it: A tale of a Chinese girl in the advanced English class of a Christian College in China. The students were asked to write a sample of free verse. She produced this:

> "God is my father;
> The earth is my mother;
> Heaven is my home;
> Why bother?"

It might be an answer to our question!

Five hundred fifty-nine women, or fifty-two per cent of those who replied to the question regret that they have not married. One hundred and forty-four more regret "sometimes." Only about a third have no regrets. Table IV gives the reasons for regrets. Perhaps we have been too meticulous in the classification but there are reasons. There is some significance in the fact that 227 women regret the lack of children, while only 102 specify a husband. "Home" is named by 70 individuals. "A richer, fuller experience," is quite possibly the

same thing as a "normal life" in different words, as is also the belief that she "would be happier married."

TABLE IV

WHY THEY REGRET NOT MARRYING

REASONS FOR REGRET	NUMBER	PERCENT
1. Believe marriage the normal life for woman	167	31.4
2. The desire for children..	89	16.7
3. The desire for a husband	19	3.5
4. The desire for husband and children.....	49	9.2
5. The desire for a home..	9	1.6
6. The desire for a home and husband.....	2	.3
7. The desire for home and children.....	57	10.7
8. The desire for home and family life.....	2	.3
9. The desire for husband, home and children...	32	6.0
10. Believes she would be happier married.....	14	2.6
11. Desire for physical relationship.....	14	2.6
12. Desire for married life (do not say why)....	5	.9
13. Regret at missing a richer, fuller experience.....	28	5.2
14. Have domestic tastes—could make good home	6	1.1
15. Dread of loneliness.....	12	2.2
16. Regret for not having found the right man..	6	1.1
17. Give one reason not so given by others.....	21	3.9
TOTAL.....	532	99.3

Many questions arise at this point, as, for example: How far is the underlying natural feminine desire for children a factor in the changes in social mores respecting sex relationships which are developing under the greater economic freedom of women? And on the other hand, to what extent will the increasing spread of knowledge of limitation of offspring affect the situation in relation to greater social tolerance of extra-legal relationships?

The twenty-one women who give each an individual reason say among other things: "Marriage seems more worth while than digging around to maintain your own life." "I have no future." "Would like to have had my children younger" (age 34—engaged). "Would have been less one-sided." "In my case an early marriage would have prevented much superfluous knowledge." This latter is one of the cases where a woman has fallen in love with and yielded to her employer.

Another writes: "I crave the perfect life which my father and mother have known, such a perfect supplementing as Cabot describes." Others are: "I have observed the meagerness of old maids." "Shall have more difficulty in marrying as the years go on." "It is better to be nearer the age of one's children." Apparently she expects to have them though she does not say so.

Those who regret "sometimes," do so for the same reasons as those whose regrets are constant. Two hundred and ninety of the 371 who do not regret tell why. Their answers are more individual and harder to classify than the reasons for regretting.

Sixty are happy and content under existing conditions; 34 are absorbed in their work and other interests, while 23 prefer freedom and independence. Observations of the marriages of others cause a number to rejoice that they are not in like case, while those who gave ill-health as a reason for not marrying are glad as time goes on that they did not venture. A number are satisfied with their women friends.

Some of the individual reasons for feeling no regret are: "The men who have asked me were not my intellectual mates." "Thus far it is not God's will." "Feel that the right man is waiting somewhere." "The men I used to go with would bore me to death now." "I believe that the unmarried woman has just as definite a place in the world as the married woman." "The women of my family usually marry after 30" (age 28). "There are plenty of chances in future incarnations." "I am too emotionally

unstable." "I have learned a heap about life that I wouldn't otherwise have learned." "I do not waste time in regrets; I have left it in God's hands." "I am not fond of children." "I feel very strongly that some of us can be far more worthwhile in the business and professional world than living with most men—anyone can do that." "I have never yet met a man I'd be willing to have as the father of my children." One who declares herself a radical writes: "A radical can be more fearless if not married. Children are hostages to the existing order. One wants them to have advantages and makes compromises for their sakes one would never make for one's own." And so on for a total of one hundred and seventeen individual rationalizations of contentment with the writer's station in life.

III

In concluding the discussion of the data supplied by our group of women, we call attention to the rather surprising fact shown in Table II that only eighteen per cent of the 1106 women replying to this question declared unequivocally that they would not marry under any circumstances. These one hundred and ninety-seven women include those who are in ill-health, most but not all of the women over fifty, some of those who have family obligations, some but not all of the homo-sexuals, and all those who dislike marriage as an institution. Those who say "perhaps" include those who see light ahead, as does the young teacher who says "perhaps, when the education of my younger brothers and sisters is completed"; or the one who would like to marry "when I am free"; those in love with married men who may be free some day, or those who fear the loneliness of the future, and some of the older women who, abundantly able to care for themselves financially, crave the certainty of intellectual congenial companionship for their declining years.

On the whole, it appears that in this group of unmarried college women, at least the large majority have no deeply rooted sex antagonism nor aversion to marriage. From a study of their papers I believe they would agree that marriage is the normal life of women, whatever may have been the exception in their individual experience. The only generalization that can be made as to why they failed to marry is that it is impossible to generalize. Yet we can summarize within limits. For example: It would appear that college women do not lack for attractive traits when only one in twenty states definitely that she has never had offers of marriage, and *over a third* have been engaged or were engaged at the time of the report. Lack of social opportunities to meet men have been the lot of very few. On the whole, the picture is one of opportunity. The rarity with which desire for a career has been the only cause to prevent marriage is rather surprising, as only one in fifty makes this statement. Unexpected also is the infrequency of revolt against marriage caused by unfortunate childhood impressions.

An English sociologist of international fame, commenting on the material gathered by our questionnaires on the sex life of normal women, says: "It is a valuable history of a group of women rapidly passing off the stage."

The twenty-one per cent of our women who were under thirty at the time of reply may resent being shoved off the scene so summarily, but if all one reads and hears is only partially true, there have been great changes of attitude and opinions among the women graduates who have come out from college these last ten years.

To have made this story more complete, we should have heard from them, but for that we shall have to wait. Then there is the man's side. *Why* did not the right man appear? Will twelve hundred college men married to women not college graduates please come forward and give their reasons for so slighting our alumnæ?

THE EYES OF YOUTH

A STORY

BY MARGARET AYER BARNES

SHE ought to keep him waiting. Narcissa knew that. She ought to be out when he arrived and breeze in on him half an hour later, from some tea or committee meeting, and find him cooling his heels on her little hearth rug, smoking cigarettes that she hoped were nervous, thinking over what he had to say. Breeze in on him, very casually contrite, laughing lightly.

"My dear! How stupid of me! Did I say five?"

Narcissa could appreciate the glamour of that entrance, picture the strategic effect of the belated arrival of a charming hostess fresh and glowing from the March cold—a brilliant, preoccupied hostess ordering tea, turning up a golden lamp or two, dropping down on the little love seat before the fire, holding her hands out to the smoldering flame and asking, with a barely perceptible glance at the clock:

"Well, Dick, old dear, what is it that you want of me?"

That glance at the clock, alone, would make him wonder if the doorbell were about to ring again or if only the prospect of an opera dinner party recalled the irrevocable flight of time.

Narcissa understood Dick. That was the type of treatment that would intrigue him. Dick had no interest in slavish devotion. Not that Dick had any interest whatever in her devotion, slavish or otherwise—any more.

Not even his note, crashing into her life after an interval of five long years, could shake Narcissa's cynical certainty on that point. But still he had written, "I want to see you, Cissy. I have something to tell you that only I can explain."

She had responded instantly, on her best note paper, though she knew then that a casual scrawl sent ten days later would be the thing to turn the trick. She had said, "Come to-morrow at five."

Of course, she knew it really wouldn't make any difference, but for her own self-respect she wished she could appear a bit triumphant. It wouldn't take Dick in, for Dick was clever; but it would help her own morale.

Despising herself, she went up to her room immediately after luncheon to prepare for that casual call, rubbed tissue cream into her face, manicured her nails, experimented with a new arrangement of the loose waves of her short dark hair to hide the gray threads at the part, weighed the écru frock against the green; lay down then on her bedroom sofa to rest, wishing she could banish thought.

It was a losing fight, this trying not to look your age when it was the unspeakable one at which she had just arrived. Dark, slim, and — well — yes, forty. But she didn't look it.

If it hadn't been for Patty she could still have passed for—certainly not more than thirty-three. Women of thirty-three, however, didn't have bouncing débutante daughters of nineteen. But not even Patty's denouncing presence at dinner table and in the drawing-

room could make her admit to a day over thirty-seven. She'd stop at thirty-seven, she decided manfully, until she was forty-five, then skip two years and wait at thirty-nine for her fiftieth birthday. After she had gone over that great edge she would seek refuge in the consolations of the intellect. At fifty, Narcissa devoutly hoped, she would hold her own by sheer force of native intelligence. Lots of clever young men adored the companionship of dreadful, disillusioned dowagers. She hoped she could grow into a really wicked old lady, an eighteenth-century old lady, whose startling epigrams would scandalize the rising generation.

What could Dick have to tell her? What was there to tell, after the stark fact, never told, but so dreadfully implied, five years before, that he didn't want to marry her? She had hardly seen him since, just casually at parties. She had never reconsidered; never tried to persuade. She had kept her dignity, woman's most priceless possession, more precious far than virtue. She had kept that, too, of course, but somehow, with the passing of the years, with the dreadful immorality of forty, one came to value virtue less highly.

If Dick's wife hadn't died just when she did, Narcissa knew she would have thrown her cap over the windmill. She had believed every word that Dick had said to her. She was all set to stage a romantic elopement, burn her bridges, cross the Rubicon. Nothing meant anything to her, not even Patty, compared with Dick.

Dick — charming, disarming Dick! So persuasive, so clever! Three years younger than herself, of course, but so obviously intrigued. Dick, the victim of circumstance. Dick, married to poor Daphne, locked up in her sanitarium, whom no one had seen for years, whose girlish gaiety and charm had become a romantic legend in her little circle.

Everyone was dreadfully sorry for Dick. His personal tragedy was never forgotten. At the most frivolous dinner party it stalked pathetically behind his winning presence. With all his buoyancy, with all his irresistible cleverness, Dick always succeeded in conveying the romantic impression of a wasted life — a life of so much emotional creative promise that was over before it was fairly begun.

It was strange how everyone came to blame poor Daphne for Dick's lack of purpose and accomplishment. He had started out so brilliantly in his career as an architect, after his return from the Beaux Arts. For nearly a decade it was everyone's ambition to achieve one of his sophisticated little interiors.

"A woman's drawing-room," Dick had said, "should become her like her gown." He had gone far on that simple slogan.

But somehow Dick had not fulfilled the promise of his early years. His little interiors were all perilously the same.

"And who could blame him," everyone asked, "with the personal problem he had to face? He was simply shot to pieces." Poor Daphne had ruined his life; and he was so lovely about her.

He had always been lovely about her, even to Narcissa; even when he explained quite clearly that Narcissa was the real love of his life and that he couldn't work, he couldn't accomplish without the emotional fulfillment which their life together would bring.

Narcissa thought it was very wonderful of him, all the more wonderful because she couldn't feel in just that beautiful way about Robert. Robert, whom she had buried two years before she ever really knew Dick, with an emotion curiously compounded of regret and relief — regret that their marital experience had been so poignant a failure; relief that poor Robert had gone before Patty was old enough to see, with the clear, unblinking eyes of youth, just what manner of man her father really was.

Poor Robert—high-living, hard-drinking Robert, who had brought her such

ephemeral happiness, such eternal disillusion. Really, after all she had lived through in their life together, Narcissa couldn't think of Robert as Dick thought of Daphne.

She would never come between Dick and Daphne. That had been her heroic resolution. She accepted, without protest, the hypothesis that divorce was impossible; that poor mad Daphne, just sane enough to understand an overt act of disloyalty, must be spared that ultimate grief.

She could not marry Dick, but she could make him happy. Not openly, of course. Dick didn't ask that. Narcissa thought it so characteristic of him that his first thought was for her reputation. She could take that little cruise which he suggested to the French West Indies. And later — later she would manage somehow. She would try not to feel shabby and shoddy and sordid. She would try to forget Patty.

And then, just as she was poised for flight, Daphne had died. That death was a dreadful shock to her. By the very act of dying so opportunely, poor Daphne had brought home to her the enormity of her transgression against Dick's wife. It was almost as if Daphne, with some strange clairvoyance of her disordered brain, had sensed the situation, had faded out of the picture at the very moment when her earthly disappearance could do more for Dick than her living presence had ever done.

Dick hadn't written to her. He hadn't wired. He hadn't come. But she understood. Dick must be shattered by the turn events had taken. She appreciated his remorse. She would wait his coming and she would meet him with the sympathy and understanding that would make everything beautiful once more between them. She would do exactly as Dick wanted.

Three weeks after Daphne's death he turned up one afternoon in her little Georgian drawing-room which two years before she had arranged and remodelled with the help of his infallible taste. Every line of the pale-green panelling, every stick of furniture, every object in the room, indeed, from the square of brocade on the table to the jade tree on the mantelpiece had come to mean to her only Dick. Alone in it, she was always sustained by the sense of his living presence.

She had come down her staircase and had found him awaiting her on the hearth rug, the same charming, disarming Dick, a little subdued, a little somber, with a new shadow in his deep-set eyes, a faint deepening of the martyred expression that had always lingered there, beyond his smile. He had taken her in his arms, quite simply.

"How I have longed for you" was all he said at first.

She had given him her sympathy, her understanding. It was all very beautiful. She had waited for him to make the first move.

And presently he had made it.

"I must get away," he had said a little brokenly. "I want a few weeks by myself. I'll sail—somewhere—I haven't quite decided. And then, I thought—perhaps you'd join me. Not in the West Indies. I couldn't, somehow, go on with just that plan. But I've been thinking—possibly the Azores? I might go to Italy and meet you there a little later. No one could possibly ever know."

Narcissa had listened to him almost un-understandingly. She had looked long into his eyes. She saw there only the same convincing look of persuasive devotion. Had her ears betrayed her? The Azores? Was he actually, now, proposing an illicit honeymoon on a forgotten island? A month of stolen happiness? An escapade? Something which no one could possibly ever know?

She had always been proud of the fact that she had risen instantly from the little love seat and had torn her fingers from his eager grasp.

"I think that would hardly be possible," she had said quite steadily. And still she could read in his eyes no sense

of betrayal. Only a look of startled surprise. "I've changed my plans," she went on stonily. She felt like a dead woman, but somehow she must conclude this interview.

"You've changed your plans?" The man looked positively wounded.

"I've changed my plans," she repeated firmly, "and, as you've kept to yours, I think it only remains for you to go."

He had gone without a scene. Narcissa had that to comfort her. She had kept her dignity, though it hadn't at all impaired his own. He had somehow managed to get himself out of that room with disgraceful composure. The inference was that she had, in his hour of need, incredibly failed him.

He went to Italy. Narcissa sometimes wondered, in the depths of her disillusion, if he subsequently enjoyed a month in the Azores; if he found an understudy for that romantic role of inspiration that could have been hers for the taking. Six months later he returned, wearing his widower's weeds with heart-breaking bravery. The strangest fact Narcissa had to face was that his touching gaiety, the wistful pathos in his deep-set eyes, still had the power to break her heart.

Why *hadn't* he wanted to marry her, when she wanted, so dreadfully, to marry him? They had had such *fun* together. They would have had fun always. Was it just that she was older? With a great strapping child like Patty? That she hadn't had much money? Daphne had had millions. Dick had them now. It couldn't have been anything as dreadful as the money? There was really no reason. He just—hadn't wanted to. But no woman would ever understand Dick just as she had. No woman, Narcissa insisted in shameless revery, would ever love him quite as much as she.

Her life, since that barren moment when she had instinctively saved both dignity and virtue, had been spent entirely on things that hadn't counted, on trivial gaiety abroad and dismal moments at home, struggling grotesquely with her ludicrous longing to love.

Of course she loved Patty. But that was different. And modern daughters were very little comfort. Filial love was so singularly lacking in that essential element, appreciation! Modern daughters never appreciated. They disapproved and disagreed and argued about their disapproval and their disagreement. And Patty was so unlike herself. A funny, practical little party, strange product of a rational generation; pretty as a picture of course, but so fearfully matter of fact. There wasn't a shred of romanticism about her.

Stretched on her bedroom sofa, waiting for the hours to pass, Narcissa forgot Dick for a moment, in her maternal solicitude over Patty. She didn't pretend to understand young people. A queer unawakened generation, for all their freedom and the reckless use they made of it. Incredibly reticent, self-possessed and mature, yet really unawakened—by things of the spirit, at least; so self-sufficient, so sure they were right, and yet so very wrong, in their persistent undervaluing of the world of sentiment.

Why, Patty was grown up. She would marry some day soon—one of those bright young men whom Narcissa hardly knew. Timmy Livingstone perhaps. He was always under foot. But Patty, of course, might marry anyone. What did she know of Patty? Nothing. Why, the child was out of the house all day and most of the night, returning at rare intervals to sleep and telephone and change her clothes. Narcissa never knew, really, whom she was seeing. At any moment an irrelevant son-in-law might crash into her life, a bolt from the blue, and make her a grandmother, almost before she knew it. A preposterous, premature grandmother!

A ring of the doorbell woke Narcissa abruptly from revery. Was it five? The clock on the mantelpiece pointed only to four. Narcissa sprang from the

sofa. But that was Patty's step on the stair. That was Patty's light tap on the door.

"Mother? Are you asleep?" That was Patty on the threshold, hat in hand, fresh and rosy from the March wind, looking like a wood nymph in her russet sport suit. "I want to telephone."

She stepped to the bedside, dropped her hat on the counterpane, and picked up the receiver.

"To whom are you telephoning, dear?" asked Narcissa. It was by such pointless trivial questions that she endeavored to keep in touch with Patty's life.

"Timmy," said Patty briefly, with a hint of irritation in her young voice. She gave the number.

"Timmy's such a nice boy," said Narcissa sympathetically. "I like him so much. Don't you, dear?"

"He's a good egg," said Patty absently, receiver at ear.

A good egg! Narcissa smiled at the graphic idiom of a rational generation. A good egg. Well—Timmy was. But at nineteen *she* wouldn't have chosen just that phrase to describe an ardent lover. However, a rose under any other name proverbially smells as sweet! And Patty was addressing the telephone.

"Hullo, hullo, Tim. . . . Can't you guess? How many other girls ring you up in office hours? I bet our name is legion! . . . Well, this is your side kick. . . . Yes, Pat. . . . Now listen, Timmy, I got your message. This is just to say, I'll be there, dearie, I'll be there. . . . Yes, the usual place at the usual time! . . . But no, Timmy! Come early. The opera's a washout. . . . Yes. 'The Meistersingers.' . . . I'll leave before the last act."

"Patty," Narcissa interrupted, "you can't do that!"

"Righto, old dear," Patty's voice went on undisturbed. "I'll be there with bells on! Good-by!" She hung up the receiver.

"Patty," said Narcissa severely, "what are you planning? You can't leave Mrs. Mackay's opera party before the last act."

"Just watch me," said Patty serenely. "You don't know what you can do till you try!"

"Where are you meeting Timmy?"

"At the box office."

"Where is he taking you?"

"To the Africana," said Patty absently, picking up her hat from the bed.

"Is that one of those black and tan places?"

"Now, mother, don't be prehistoric. They have the best band in town."

"I don't want you to go."

Patty tranquilly confronted her mother, tranquilly but decidedly. A very obstinate wood nymph.

"Mother, you should be in a museum. You're a period piece."

Narcissa sighed.

"Well, I suppose Timmy will take care of you."

Patty laughed indulgently.

"I'll take care of Timmy! You know, mother, how that is—what it does for a man—to love a good woman!" Abruptly she left the room.

Really, thought Narcissa helplessly, she ought to do something about Patty. But not now, not just this minute. It was half-past four. Dick would come in half an hour. She hoped Patty wouldn't burst in on their tête-à-tête. But she wouldn't, of course. She never bothered with her mother's friends. A man at the tea table was no intriguing novelty.

Narcissa, having combed for the last time her short dark locks, and decided irrevocably on the green, descended the staircase, and contemplated the charming little interior from the threshold. It *was* a lovely room. And it was Dick all over. She had never moved a chair from the original positions in which he had placed them. And the room became her. Dick had seen to that.

Narcissa glanced at her image, reflected from the doorway, in the mirror over the fireplace. In that golden light,

against those faded Georgian panels, she looked young and really lovely, in her soft green draperies. She stood the test of time. She was not afraid to see Dick again. At least not for that reason.

She struck a match and kindled the fire, moved the jade tree an inch, to the precise center of the little shelf, smiled reassuringly at herself in the mirror before turning to contemplate the room from a new angle. Then she moved to the table to rearrange the golden tulips in the great glass bowl. Dick always said she had a gift with flowers.

The doorbell rang. Narcissa felt a sudden surge of panic. Incredible, devastating, to think he had not been in this room since that other March afternoon, five years ago, when she had sent him out of it. She glanced again, a little fearfully, in the mirror. She was all right, of course, looking her best, really. Still—Narcissa moved hurriedly to turn out the lamp near the chimney piece. The firelight was pleasanter. She heard the front door open and close. Her heart was beating absurdly. She dropped on the love seat and composed her draperies. A step on the stair. An ardent, hurried step and Dick stood on the threshold.

"Cissy!" he said. Just "Cissy!" And his eager face broke into an ingenuous smile. "How nice to be here again! How sweet of you to let me come!"

Narcissa rose from the love seat.

"Your note sounded—urgent."

He took her hand. She hadn't meant to offer it. Somehow, when she saw him standing there, so easily, so gracefully, on her hearth rug, the sense of insult rose again in her breast.

"It *was* urgent. But don't let's talk of that just this first minute. I want to look about me. I want to look at you. Everything is exactly the same."

Charming, disarming Dick! Narcissa rallied her forces.

"You saw me last week at the Livingstone ball. Wasn't it Friday?" She dropped back on the little love seat. "Did you expect to find me irrevocably altered since then?"

"Cissy!" he protested pleasantly. "Don't be captious! Be nice to me, now I'm here! I meant the room, of course. It's really lovely. One of the best I ever did. And you haven't moved a paperweight! How awfully wise of you!" He sank down in an armchair. "So many women change their drawing-rooms as often as they change their hats. It's so confusing of them! I'm glad they do, of course. I don't know what would become of architects in a world of women like you!"

He seemed perfectly at home. He betrayed no trace of embarrassment. Narcissa found herself perversely wishing that she had made the place completely over; that he had found the little scene quite swept and garnished of all old associations when he made his belated re-entrance.

The maid brought in the tea.

"Scones!" cried Dick rapturously as he surveyed the tray. "Cissy, why are you the only woman in the world who can achieve real Scotch scones for tea?"

"I didn't remember that you cared for them particularly," lied Narcissa bravely.

"Of course you didn't! But you are a woman, Cissy, whose every casual gesture is distinguished by unerring felicity! I adore them, and I haven't had them since last I had them here."

"How do you take your tea?" asked Cissy with bravado. Dick gave the requested information without a twinkle, but he wasn't deceived for a moment. It was dreadful, really dreadful, the Darby-and-Joan atmosphere which this occasion was acquiring. Narcissa felt like a discarded mistress. She wasn't, thank heaven, quite that!

Dick settled back in his armchair with a sigh of pleasure over his fragrant cup of orange pekoe. Delightful, debonair Dick. He didn't look a day older. The touch of gray about his ears lent only

distinction to his boyish grace. His eyes were fastened on her face with a smile of quizzical admiration. Really, how charming he was, thought Narcissa, her eyes averted, her hands busy with the tea things. She would never get over him. Might she have, she wondered, if she had been his mistress? If Daphne had died a week later? If rapture had preceded disillusion? If she had loved before she had lost? If she had had the opportunity to learn from bitter experience that nothing is ever quite as good as you thought it was going to be?

Dick broke the little pause.

"You don't know, Cissy, how I've missed you all these years." That was rank effrontery; but when her eyes met his she felt them softening.

"Have you?" she murmured; and, in spite of herself, her voice sounded perilously tender.

"Don't you know?" he asked. "No one ever understood me as you did."

She tore her eyes from his. This direct attack was very confusing. What did he want of her?

"I'm glad you thought so," she said briefly. "I felt, myself, I understood you very well."

"You would always understand everything. And you would always forgive."

Narcissa managed a little mocking laugh.

"'*Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner*'," she quoted gaily. "Aren't you growing a little sentimental, Dick, in your old age?"

She thought he winced a trifle at her last words.

"Do you feel old?" he asked. "I don't myself. And yet I'm thirty-seven."

"Certainly I don't!" protested Narcissa with indignation. "I don't feel a day over twenty-five! And every year," she went on courageously, "I have more fun. There's been an awful lot of nonsense talked about the pangs of growing older."

"That's like you, Cissy," he said admiringly. "You'll always be wonderful."

"I hope," said Narcissa severely, "that I'll always be adequate. I feel more—competent than I used to. That's the only way I notice the touch of time. I'm quite equal, now," she went on steadily, "to any situation which might ever arise."

"I'm glad you feel that way," said Dick simply.

There was a little pause. He replaced his cup upon the tea tray and rose to stand before the flickering fire. The flutter of the flame was for a moment the only movement in the silent room.

"Cissy," said Dick, "I've come to ask you something."

There was a faint tremor in his voice. Narcissa looked up at him quickly. He looked really ill at ease now, and very much moved. Narcissa's heart was beating fast.

"What is it, Dick?" she asked, and her voice was breathless.

He made a restless movement.

"Cissy," he said, "I—I haven't got the nerve to tell you."

Her heart went out to him. He was really in difficulty.

"Dick, you mustn't feel that way, ever, about me."

He gave her a grateful glance.

"I know, Cissy. But this—this is difficult."

Narcissa's eyes dropped before his own. He was obviously deeply in earnest. The old persuasive note had crept back into his voice. Why—it could only mean one thing. Narcissa sat motionless, her eyes fixed on her hands, clasped tightly on her lap. Hearing that undertone of emotion in his broken voice, Narcissa knew that Dick had come back to her. He had come back to take her on her own terms. He had recognized his mistake. It was up to her now to open or close the door on happiness. Dick had come a-wooing. She could not be mistaken. She knew Dick too well.

"What is it, Dick?" she asked softly,

and with the words the door to happiness swung invitingly ajar.

"It's hard to tell you, though I know you'll understand." He turned, suddenly, to face the fire. He gazed a moment silently at the flaming logs. "You see, Cissy, I—I want to marry your daughter."

Narcissa sat quite motionless on the little love seat, her eyes upon her tea tray. This—this was beyond everything. This was the end of the world. There was an awful silence. Narcissa would have given her soul to break it. But no words came to her. She sat as in a trance. The little, wavering, half-invisible flame beneath her kettle obtruded itself on her dazed attention. She moved to turn it out. The kettle was empty, she thought stupidly. Her hands were shaking so that she couldn't even grasp the little handle. She gave it up, after a futile moment. She clasped her hands again, tightly, so they wouldn't tremble. Her knuckles were white. Her rings cut into her fingers.

"You want to marry—Patty?" she said at last. How long had the silence lasted? Narcissa never knew.

He turned now to look at her.

"I want to marry Patty," he said firmly.

"I—I don't believe you," said Narcissa. "I can't believe you. Patty is a child."

"Patty is nineteen," said Dick very reasonably. His face lighted up as he added quickly, "and Patty is adorable."

The words stung Narcissa instantly into action.

"You can't marry Patty!" she said hotly. "I—I won't permit it."

"Can you help it?" asked Dick with a sudden flash of anger. Then quickly, penitently, "Forgive me, Cissy. I didn't mean quite that."

What a cad he was, thought Narcissa passionately. What an utter cad! To come back like this, to the very same room, to say he wanted—Patty. Why—the echoes of their former fatal interview still trembled for Narcissa in the circumambient air. Then it was—the Azores. Now it was her daughter. And his note of pleading was precisely the same. But this time, it had ended in an ultimatum. He had threatened her. Taunted her with her helplessness. But she wasn't helpless. She was Patty's mother. She could— But what could she do, thought Narcissa desperately, with a surging memory of the obstinate wood nymph she had faced not an hour ago in her room upstairs? Patty wouldn't give up even a night club for her mother. What chance was there of persuading her to abandon a desperate lover? A lover like—Dick? There was no hope in Patty.

And Dick? Dick would override all protest. Dick would ignore appeal. Hadn't she seen him, five years before on that very hearth rug, break through the cobweb ties of honor, without a scruple, without a shame?

But she would die fighting.

"Of course I can prevent it," she said superbly and deftly extinguished the alcohol lamp as she spoke. She had herself in hand now. "Patty is my child."

"Isn't your first concern her happiness?"

"Would she find happiness with you?" Scorn pointed her words.

"I think she would," said Dick promptly. "We have everything in common."

Everything in common! Patty and Dick! How perfectly preposterous! Why the child was an ignoramus, without taste, without knowledge. She had no conception of Dick's interests. Besides, how did he know? When had he seen her?

"Have you been much with her?" she asked guardedly.

"Why, I've been seeing her all winter. We've been constantly together."

Of course that was possible. She knew so little of Patty's companionship. Dick was at all the parties. But it seemed incredible that the child should have known him so well and never men-

tioned him. But Patty mentioned no one, except in answer to direct questions. She never discussed her affairs.

"Have you spoken to her?" Her heart hung on his answer. It came quickly, reproachfully:

"Cissy, do you think I would? Before I spoke to you?"

"I would put nothing beyond you," she said coldly.

"You're unfair to me, Cissy. You're awfully unfair. There's no reason in the world why I shouldn't marry your daughter . . . "

"Please . . . " said Narcissa gravely.

"Can you name a reason?" He looked at her keenly. "Is there a reason you could name?"

Narcissa's eyes flashed fire.

"I know what manner of man you are," said Narcissa firmly. "That's reason enough."

"For you perhaps. But not for me—and Patty. Cissy—listen to me. I love your daughter. I could make her happy. Can't you see, don't you understand, that the situation concerns no one but me and the woman I love?"

"Why, then, did you come to me?"

"I came because I wanted to be on the square with you, Cissy. I wanted to tell you what I was doing before it was done."

"How *very* honorable of you," said Narcissa. Dick winced at her words. Then his tone suddenly altered.

"Cissy, don't treat me so unkindly. Don't you know, you who know everything, what I've been through over it all? I'm in hell, Cissy. Absolutely in hell. I have been for months. I can't work any more—I can't think. There's no one but you to help me. I—I counted absolutely on your understanding."

His voice tore at her heart strings. What a fool she was! She would never get over him. He was watching her intently.

"It was foolish of me to speak as I did, Cissy," he said gently. "You have my life in your hands, of course. I throw myself on your mercy."

"I can't—be merciful," said Narcissa piteously. "You—you shouldn't ask it."

"I do ask it," he returned gravely. His eyes met hers. They were pitiful, beseeching. Before she could reply the door to the hall was flung open abruptly and Patty entered the room. Dick wheeled to stare at her.

"I'm hungry," said Patty pleasantly. "Can I have a cup of tea? Why, it's Richard! Hullo, Dicky-bird!"

Dicky-bird! Narcissa gasped at the word. Dick's lips curved in a triumphant smile. The child advanced tranquilly toward the fire.

"I'm afraid the scones are cold," said Narcissa, steadily.

"I like chocolate cake better," said Patty amiably, picking up a piece without a plate and munching it cheerfully as she perched on the arm of the love seat.

Narcissa gave her her tea, looking dumbly up at her, trying to understand, trying to see the child with new eyes. It was no use. She couldn't. This was just—Patty. Her little girl, strayed from the nursery into the drawing-room. She was not even a very tidy little girl at the moment. She had not troubled to brush her hair. It was still ruffled from the mad March wind. Why, the child looked messy, positively messy, in that crumpled sport suit, with traces of chocolate on her finger tips and cake crumbs in her lap! Narcissa strove to be casual.

"You don't look very tidy, my dear," she said.

"I should worry," smiled Patty. "There's only Dick. He won't mind."

"On the contrary," said Dick very earnestly, "I think you look charming. 'A sweet disorder in the dress,' he quoted lightly, 'kindles in clothes a wantonness.'"

Patty twinkled up at him. But "Isn't he literary?" was all she said as she applied herself to her tea.

Narcissa rose abruptly. This was more than she could bear. Dick did not

mean to go. She saw that clearly. And Patty obviously had designs on a second piece of cake. But she—she really couldn't see them together like this a moment longer. She'd have to get used to the idea, alone. There was nothing she could do about it. The situation had slipped from her control; had never really been there. She had known that the moment Patty had entered the room—the moment that she had heard that fatal "Dicky-bird." She would retreat, retreat, once more, with dignity. She would leave her daughter the field.

"I have some notes to write, Dick," she said evenly, "and I'm dining early. If you'll excuse me I'll—leave you to Patty."

Again, a little unexpectedly, she found her hand in his.

"I'll take good care of her," he said with grateful humility.

"Patty takes very good care of herself," Narcissa answered proudly. She wished she could believe her own words. Without another glance for the child on the love seat, she walked with composure to the door.

Alone in her bedroom, Narcissa sat quietly down on her sofa to face the future. She still felt, absurdly, that it couldn't be going to happen, that life wasn't going to ask this of her—to see Patty, Patty, in Dick's arms; Patty, in tranquil possession of the riches that she had never possessed; Patty, holding in her childish hands the priceless treasure of Dick's love. Herself, the grandmother of Dick's children. It must be a nightmare. It couldn't be true. Life couldn't be so cruel. She had known disillusion. She had known despair. But this was complete devastation.

In the drawing-room downstairs Patty might now be in Dick's arms, listening to the vows of eternal devotion that fell—oh, Narcissa knew how glibly!—from his eager lips. She had been a coward. An arrant coward. She had thought only of herself . . . and of Dick. Not at all, really, of Patty. Jealousy, green-eyed jealousy, nothing more admirable, had barbed her tongue. She should have protected Patty, saved her from those false protestations. But would they be false—when addressed to her daughter? How could she tell? How could she know? Dick had deceived her. But would he deceive Patty? Hadn't she been, after all, the victim of self-deception? She had been a fool. She had played her cards badly. She hadn't been clever enough to manage. One had only oneself to blame for failure. It wasn't fair, it really wasn't fair, to hold it all up against Dick.

A step on the stair arrested her attention. Why, it couldn't be Patty! It wasn't twenty minutes since she had left them together. Had Dick unexpectedly succumbed to belated scruple; touched by her abdication, made a generous gesture; put off at least until to-morrow what might so easily have been done to-day?

"Patty?" she called tremulously. And again, "Patty."

The child stood in the doorway, cool, unconcerned, perhaps a trifle annoyed.

"What is it, mother?"

"Has Dick gone?"

"Yes."

There was a moment's pause.

"Why did he go so soon?"

"He wanted to," said Patty briefly, a hint of defiance in her voice.

"Patty—what did you say to him?"

The child made a pettish little gesture of irritation.

"Oh, really, mother . . . Do you know what he came to say to me?"

"Yes, Patty."

"Well, you needn't trouble to argue about it, mother," said Patty combatively. "It won't do a bit of good. I've made up my mind."

"You've—made up your mind?" Narcissa could hardly pronounce the words.

"Yes. And I know everything you're going to say before you say it. I know you think he's charming. I know he has millions. I've had an earful on his

tragic life. But I just don't think he's attractive. That settles it for me."

Narcissa rose unsteadily from her sofa.

"You—don't—think—he's—attractive?" Her stiff lips with difficulty framed the words.

"Mother! Have a heart! I know he's the dowager's delight, but I just don't like him. He thinks he's such a sheik!"

"Patty!" cried Narcissa in horrified protest. Really at such blasphemy her hands flew to her ears.

"He does, mother. He's been hanging around young people's parties all winter. But he's eighteen years older than I am—just an old man—for all his winning ways."

A wave of pity flooded Narcissa's heart. Patty never looked lovelier than she did at that moment, standing flushed and defiant on the threshold. Narcissa moved quickly to take the child in her arms. She kissed the cool pink cheek. Then suddenly Narcissa began to cry.

"Mother!" cried Patty incredulously. "What's the matter?"

"I'm so sorry for him, Patty," she heard herself incredibly saying. "So dreadfully sorry."

"He's sorry for himself," remarked Patty coolly. "He thought he was irresistible. Well—he's learned that I can resist him."

Narcissa turned, sobbing, and sank upon her sofa.

"Youth's—terribly—cruel," said Narcissa, weakly.

Patty advanced to the sofa side and regarded her mother with mute amazement. Narcissa's tears broke into hysterical laughter.

"But you don't have to marry him, darling—to please me!"

FARM WIFE

BY STERLING NORTH

IMPOTENT as a tired wind in brown grass
Or leaf on a slow stream,
She sits beside the fire
Finding no dream
For earth or any lover.
She has forgotten now,
Or only half remembers,
How children came each year with planting grain
(Warm lips upon her breast);
And you might never know by looking on her face
How once she loved the wild lake
And clover sweet with rain.

THE KING'S JESTER: MODERN STYLE

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

IN THE old days, before the king business went into practical liquidation, the court jester was an established institution. This functionary's job required him not only to be entertaining, but also realistic; in fact, his success at entertainment was pretty strictly conditioned by his sense of reality. All the other court functionaries cooked up the king's facts for him before delivery; the jester delivered them raw. This was the curious convention of the time. The jester was the only person permitted to tell the king the plain, unupholstered truth about things as he saw them, even about royalty itself and the most intimate matters pertaining to royalty; and he was not only permitted but expected to do this. The jester criticized State policies in a full-mouthed way that would have insured anybody else a life sojourn in the bastille; and he got praise and favor for it. He could tell the king that his favorite mistress was a mercenary old rip who should be thrown to the sharks and, as our phrase goes, he could get away with it, and be applauded for it, which no one else could do, either in the court or in the kingdom at large.

Historically, I believe, nobody knows how this peculiar institution grew up, or where it came from. It may have arisen out of the fundamental need of human nature for an occasional contact with fact and truth. A king was a vertebrated animal, like anyone else; and as such he could not live by pretense alone. Once in a while, probably, he had to brace up on a little refreshing go at fact and truth. But he could not approach fact and truth *seriously* because of their highly explosive quality. They might go off at any moment, and blow the political edifice into the air. His official or serious contacts could be only with pretense, because pretense was the foundation of the whole regime of absolutism. The institution of the jester, therefore, enabled royalty to have its fling, upon the strict conventional understanding that it should not "count," that the experience should be merely exhilarating, and not translatable into purpose and action.

In another respect, too, the jester was exempt from the regular rules of court etiquette. It seems from old accounts that he could mix around promiscuously with everybody, high, low, rich, and poor. He was at home everywhere, in palace or hovel, and everybody made much of him in ways that must have helped him out a good deal in the discharge of his function. Nobody ever put up a front with the jester; he always saw people as pretty much their natural selves. Thus he gravitated into the confidence of the general run of folks and learned what they were thinking about. This was likely to make him—and often did make him—a good interpreter of the popular mind. He spoke with the people's voice and in the tone of popular opinion and judgment.

In a republic the people are sovereign, nominally and perhaps really. But as far as the republican principle has as yet been worked out, it has mostly taken over and recostumed the main essentials of the old order and put them at work again quite in the old way. The

French and American Revolutions made absolutism step aside only long enough to change its clothes in decent privacy, before resuming its place at the old stand. Make-believe remains as the foundation and chief working asset of the new political system, as it was of the old. Under these circumstances it is highly interesting to observe that the many-headed sovereign seems to show the same old need for occasional contact with fact and truth that the single-headed sovereign used to show, and that the republican system has set up a device whereby he can make it on the same old terms. This device, exactly like that of the king's jester, embodies a strict convention. It enables the many-headed monarch to make his contact with fact and truth on the clear and careful undertaking that it shall not count, that he shall not take the experience seriously as something translatable into purpose and action.

This republican counterpart of the king's jester is the newspaper-paragrapher and paragrapher-cartoonist. His development, and the privileged character of his position in our system, constitute one of the most impressive curiosities of modern journalism. No more exact parallel to the primitive institution could be devised. The paragrapher has inherited all the jester's privileges, neither more nor fewer, and exactly the same set of expectations are put upon him. The freer his speech to the sovereign lord, the closer and shrewder his approach to the plain natural truth of things, the more he is appreciated and applauded. The wider his experience of human nature and the closer his interpretations come to the residual common sense of mankind, the more firmly, by common consent, he is fixed in his job. The more profound and subversive his implications, the stronger his position at the republican sovereign's court. Moreover, there is no one to contest or to share his privileges; he is a unique figure in a unique function. If the prophet, the publicist, the professor, lecturer, or so-called public servant undertook to assume his liberties and prerogatives he would at once come to grief in an avalanche of general disapproval.

II

It has amused me for some time to keep more or less consecutive track of our paragraphers and to weigh their utterances critically. I began this practice during the War. Being in Europe a good deal at the time, and in a position which made it desirable for me to have accurate knowledge of what was really going on, I began to pay great and increasing heed to the paragraphers; with such good results that I suppose I can say I am the only observer of that period who put practically his whole dependence on the comic papers. In all countries, long before I waded through statesmen's speeches and publicists' deliverances, I assembled all the comic papers I could get my hands on, and studied them prayerfully. I may say, too (for it is in praise of my authorities and not of myself) that I know of no observer who came out right oftener than I did, whether in an estimate of the present or a forecast of the future. Since then I have kept up the practice and got big dividends out of it. When I wish an interpretation or an illumination of the day's news I turn to the paragraphers for it; not to the editorial writers. After all, this is quite in the tradition. If the oldtime king had let the jester take the measure of things for him and acted on it he would have mostly come out better than he did, because the jester was the most experienced and disinterested person he had about him, and—most important of all—entirely unanswerable to the general conventions of the court.

It is not generally realized, I believe, that the paragrapher has so significant a position among us at the present time; indeed, without a rather attentive analysis of his work, it could probably not be realized. Yet the realization is useful, if

only to reveal to ourselves the lengths we unconsciously go in our subscription to pretense and make-believe; and the best way to get it is by free discussion of some examples.

Among the extracts from the press that I have lately potted I find the following:

> You can't expect a professional politician to make up his bed and then lie on it. He's more likely to make up his bunk and then lie out of it.

This is a perfect example of the jester's license, exercised at the expense of his fellow-courtiers; it is the product of a shrewd, experienced, realistic mind. Its implications are profound and subversive and, put in this way, or rather, under these privileged conditions, they are wholly acceptable to the many-headed sovereign. In them he feels the welcome contact with fact and truth. But he cannot take his experience seriously because the whole array of protective convention thrown over our political system forbids it. If there were any question of his taking it seriously, indeed, he would rise up in royal indignation and declare that he had never had any such experience, but on the contrary was much annoyed by the jester's presumption, and would go promptly after his scalp.

A little imagination will show the truth of this. The implications of this paragraph are that politicians, of whatever stripe, school, or party, are lying, swindling fellows, untrustworthy and inconsiderable, and out for their own purposes. Exactly the same implications appear in another paragraph, which I put beside it:

> The crookedest politics is always measured by the plum line.

Utterances like these, subversive as they are, never attract the royal disapproval; they never lose the paper that prints them a single subscriber. In fact, if they are frequent enough and pungent enough, they are a good circulation-getter. But now imagine any newspaper taking their implications seriously and molding its news-policy and editorial policy upon them! Suppose, say, that the Baltimore *Sun* should decide to go before the sovereign public in a perfectly realistic attitude towards politics and politicians of all parties—which is exactly the attitude appearing in these two paragraphs! I do not mean that the paper should inveigh against politics in every issue, or be always calling politicians liars and swindlers, but simply that it consistently give its entire treatment of politics, both in news and editorial form, the precise "slant" of those two paragraphs. What would be the consequence? Practically every one of those who now accept the jester's implications, who know that the jester has quite perfectly hit off their own convictions and made himself the echo of their own consciousness, even reflecting back to them their own tone and temper, would get into a great state of indignation and resentment over the republican equivalent of lese-majesty, and would stop their subscription.

An effective paragrapher in one of our most prominent newspapers makes this observation on the course of American imperialism:

> An American syndicate is bidding for a concession to extract the salts from the Dead Sea. Which suggests the difficulty of landing marines near this inland sea for the purpose of protecting American lives and property.

Another paper of almost equal prominence has the following on the same general topic:

> RICH GOLD STRIKE MADE IN PHILIPPINES
> Nature seems determined not to have those islands independent.

Now, what newspaper can safely reproduce upon its news policy and editorial policy the implications of these remarks? One thinks at once of the late Frank A. Munsey moving about among his editorial writers, saying, "Now, no opinions! Remember—no opinions!"

Yet everyone is aware—everyone who has enough intelligence to be aware of anything—that these paragraphs imply the plain natural truth about the dinosaurian progress of the imperialism begun under Mr. Jefferson in the Louisiana tract, and continued in the Floridas and the various Indian territories, in Texas, the Northwest, the Coast, Hawaii, the Philippines, and latterly in the Caribbean. The many-headed sovereign thus has his refreshing and relieving approach to fact and truth, but he cannot for a moment take it seriously; the consequences would be ruinous. His serious approach to the topic of imperialism in the case of the Philippines, for example, must be made with reverential regard to convention, by way of such guarded writing as I saw lately in an editorial on the subject, or such as anyone can see in any editorial—it is stereotyped—about the necessity of holding the Filipinos in leash indefinitely for their own good, and in order to instruct them "how to develop their natural resources in an orderly and profitable manner."

When an election comes on we all know how convention presides over any avenue of serious approach to the subject. The volume and character of news-writing, editorial-writing, feature-writing, personality sketches, the broadcasting of speeches, and so on, conspire to represent this event as something of enormous moment. The "issues of the campaign" are conventionally scrutinized, and a strictly conventional attitude maintained towards the pledges and promises of the several candidates or parties. The other day I noticed the work of a paragrapher-cartoonist, entitled, "Another Gas War Looming." It showed a voter in a Ford car, pulled up in the midst of half a dozen filling-stations labelled, "High Test Promises," "Economy Promises," "More Miles per Taxes," and such like, with a vociferous candidate standing beside each one, imploring patronage. The voter's soliloquy was, "Well, I oughtn't to have any trouble getting 'filled up' with all these filling-stations around." Here the American sovereign gets the realistic rather than the conventional line of approach to the national event. It falls in precisely with his intuitive sense of the plain natural truth of things, but he dare not admit that it does, even to himself. His appreciation of the experience is strictly within the limits set by convention; and herein once more he is precisely on a level footing with the kings of old.

Concerning the specific character of partisan political claims and promises, a Mid-Western paragrapher dryly observed that:

> Probably the funniest thing that has developed in our national politics lately is the horrified fear of the residue of the Ohio Crowd lest Tammany get hold of the Government and corrupt it.

Probably it is. But the sense of fact and reality conveyed by this observation is not by way of disparagement of either the Ohio Crowd or Tammany, but of both together equally. The many-headed American sovereign at once gets the implication, by no means new to his consciousness, that political parties, whatever their conventional designation, really divide themselves only into the Ins and the Outs. The Ins are in and wish to stay in, while the Outs are out and wish to get in; and both the Ins and the Outs will cheerfully authorize any sacrifice whatever of collective or personal integrity, or both, to attain their ends. Another paragrapher conveys the same implication a little more delicately, thus:

> Of course, we don't aim to be mean about it, but we can't help noticing that all this Mississippi water got loose under a Republican Administration.

Some of us are old enough to remember the hurricane of obloquy that came down on poor old General Hancock for saying that the tariff is a local issue. Here was a capital instance of a courtier invading the jester's bailiwick and encroaching on his privileges; for General Hancock was a candidate for the Pres-

idency, and the many-headed sovereign was keeping close watch on his attitude towards the established conventions. The conventional, official, correct approach to the tariff was by way of showing that it was necessary only for the revenue, as the Democrats said, or, as the Republicans contended, for the protection of labor's right to work, or to keep the dinner-pail full, or to keep the blight of European pauper-labor competition off our infant industries. No one dared remotely hint that the tariff was a device for swindling the domestic consumer out of the difference between the competitive price and the price as augmented by the amount of the tariff-duty. No one, that is, except the Court Jester; he could make as free as he liked with this idea, and the sovereign and the boys would wink at one another, and have a jolly laugh all round. But General Hancock had no such privilege. His remark carried the most serious implications of lese-majesty, and it got him out of royal favor in no time at all.

If the question of the tariff is revived, as we see some prospect that it will be, a distinct set of conventions will be devised for the approach to it—the serious and official approach. Such are the traditions of absolutism. We cannot yet be sure what the conventional lines of approach will be, but we can be sure that any mention of the fundamental fact of pilferage committed upon the domestic consumer will remain outlawed from court etiquette. Any hint that the tariff is a mere delegation of the taxing power into the hands of court favorites—in effect exactly what the old royal method of tax-farming used to be—will put the offender into outer darkness, to keep company with the puzzled shade of General Hancock. The jester, however, while all this is going on, will regale and refresh his mighty sovereign with such observations as this:

> Florida fruit-growers want a protective tariff now. Their democracy ends at oranges and bananas.

Or this:

> Well, the French action on tariffs ought to call our attention again to the great truth that an infant industry thirteen feet tall looks peculiar in rompers.

Or the following comment on a tendency that we all perfectly well understand, but can by no manner of means seriously discuss:

> What the French seem unable to understand about our elastic tariff is why it always stretches upwards.

The relations between the United States and England have long been the object of a very distinct court etiquette, and they may not be approached realistically, except at risk of the usual pains and penalties. We have all noticed this particularly in the reports of our various institutes and schools for the study of international affairs, as well as in the day-to-day editorial comment on our foreign policy. Realistic treatment of the late irruption of the Mayor of Chicago, for instance, is not permissible. To be strictly loyal to our sovereign's code, probably we should not even permit ourselves to think realistically about it; yet just that is what everyone does, the sovereign himself necessarily included. Hence the sovereign gets back a pleasing echo of his inmost thoughts from the paragrapher's observation that—

> Big Bill Thompson says he is going to make a bonfire of all the books that have pro-British propaganda in them. But how will he find them, unless maybe the bankers out there are easier than ours, and make a practice of letting the Mayor have access to their ledgers?

Well, the United States has immense power and an immense deal of money; and what Government situated as England's is, and with the Heaven-sent help of language-monopoly, would not strain every nerve to keep on the blind side of so much money and power? If there is not pro-British propaganda at practically every crossroads in the United States, then it would seem that the City

and the British Foreign Office, with all their innumerable satellites in journalism and statecraft, stand convicted of sheer lunacy. Just so long as the United States has a lot of money and power, so long it will be infested with the vermin of British propaganda, French propaganda, Fascist propaganda, and every other kind that thinks it has any faint chance of drawing blood.

Far above and beyond court etiquette, there are of course always certain distinctions of taste involved in a creditor's attitude towards a debtor. Observance of these distinctions, however, is by no means inconsistent with reservations *in petto* which make up a vivid regret at having been misled into a bad investment; and this is what we discern in the paragrapher's mournful observation that—

> Every day, in every way, Europe gets nearer and dearer to the United States.

—and also in his remark that—

> Secretary Hoover advises caution in making loans to Europe. It is excellent advice, and only about $11,000,000,000 late.

Perhaps the most rigid and sensitive conventions in our whole court etiquette are those that surround the American conception of success. America was always a land of opportunity in a double sense. It afforded a great opportunity for production, and hence a great demand for labor at a high wage. It also afforded a great opportunity to exploit production through certain forms of legalized monopoly, and through what we know under the euphemism of "financial operations." This latter form of opportunity was, obviously, not the one to be talked about; and the more the other form was glorified and kept to the front, the easier it was for the latter to escape undue attention. So we have always heard a great deal of the "gospel of work and thrift," and, naturally, those who had profited most by the exploitation of production were the most forward in promoting this doctrine; the most notable living example, no doubt, being Mr. John D. Rockefeller.

Circumstances have lately taken a good deal of emphasis off America as the land of opportunity for the rewards of work and thrift, though it is probably as much so at the moment as it ever was. But our court etiquette is still quite stringently against a realistic intellectual acceptance of certain notable American codes and practices as so many devices for the looting of production. Yet in regard to this, which I repeat is probably the most sensitive of our court conventions, the jester's privilege remains free, open, and acceptable to his squeamish sovereign. A paragrapher lately remarked that—

> As a result of the recent rise in the stock of the New York National Bank, George F. Baker is reputed to be $7,500,000 richer than he was ten days ago. This shows what hard work will do for a man.

Another extremely sensitive set of conventions are those surrounding our general organization of influence upon public opinion through advertising and press-agentry. It is so sensitive, indeed, and its authority is so far-reaching and effective, that anyone who makes the faintest motion towards a serious infringement upon it will instantly find every avenue of public expression closed to him. Yet even here the jester remains free to bring out the most subversive implications regarding these practices, as when he says:

> There are cigarettes now that will stop coughs, help the singing voice, and make one feel happy and contented, but we are not going to rest satisfied until some manufacturer puts one on the market that will stop hair from falling out.

Or again more subtly, as when he says:

> Our private opinion is that no one is really as competent as Herbert Hoover is supposed to be.

Not only is the jester freely privileged to bring out these implications against the objects sheltered by our conventions;

he brings out implications that are still more subversive against the whole code of etiquette itself—one may say, against the convention of erecting a convention:

> The same kind of people who think a subsidy is merely a little subvention, and that imperialism is benevolent assimilation, think a lobbyist is a legislative superintendent.

The conventional line of approach to the question of disarmament and international peace leads through Geneva and the headquarters of the League of Nations. Loyal courtiers of the many-headed sovereign must keep up the fiction of following that line, and the more preposterous the fiction becomes, the more doggedly and mechanically they must stick to it. The jester is under no such necessity. A paragrapher lately set off the conventional view and the realistic view side by side in the same paragraph, thus:

> Commander Savage, of the American Legion, said in Paris: "It is a splendid sight to see Europe at peace." It isn't, but it would be.

Another paragrapher brings out the plain and natural but officially inadmissible truth of the situation, thus:

> Nations aren't likely to beat their swords into ploughshares while beating their rivals into oil-fields.

Still another sums up the recent discussions of disarmament in a similar vein of realism:

> The big idea is that it is a fine thing to have plenty of armament, so long as it is not being used in a warlike manner.

Similarly, the official and serious line of approach to the American Legion's recent junket in France is by way of Lafayette, the Unknown Soldier, and the great ideal of Liberty and Democracy. There are absolute considerations of taste and manners, quite apart from the arbitrary code of our court etiquette, which suggest circumspection in dealing with the idea that there was collaterally, at least, a more realistic motive behind France's spectacular hospitality towards the Legion. Nevertheless, that idea is not absent from the sovereign's mind, and he finds his own shrewd suspicions reflected from the coincidence brought to his attention thus:

> "Paris Delighted over Convention's Success," says one headline. "Legion spends $15,000,000," says another. And putting the two together . . .

III

If one were drawing the regular conclusion from all that has been set forth, it would perhaps be in the vein of fault-finding with the persistent human preference for pretense and make-believe over fact and truth, the persistent dislike and avoidance of realism. Yet the larger one's experience of men and things becomes, the more difficult and inappropriate this complaint seems. "What a Bedlamite is man!" said Thomas Jefferson in his old age, after years spent in observing this inveterate aversion to realism. There is no possible doubt of it. He also said, as others after him have said, how likely it is that the other planets use this one for a lunatic asylum. Yet he did not say these things despondingly, for, true as this view of our mundane affairs undoubtedly is, one cannot become indignant about it. In the present state of human development nothing else seems possible, or if it were possible—here is the great point—nothing else seems really very desirable.

One can conceive of a world of perfect consistency, a world governed absolutely by realism, that would be highly interesting to live in—much more interesting than our present world—if it were peopled exclusively by spirits like Thomas Jefferson. But unfortunately there is not enough of that kind of population available at present to go around in such a world; and, considering the kind of population that is available, such a world, if one could bring it into existence overnight, would be very dull.

Think of a world governed by common sense, reason, and justice, but actually inhabited by human beings who had not yet outgrown the ordinary predilections that we know and see exhibited on every hand—who would wish to live in it? The old materialistic conception of Heaven, even, had to postulate an entire population of transformed and improved beings to inhabit it, for any other kind would have found it intolerable.

Considerations like these effectively check the rise of indignation in the radical devotee of reason and realism. They checked it in Thomas Jefferson, in Socrates, in Marcus Aurelius, in Jesus, in all who have had a wide experience of human affairs and made a proper use of their experience. These spirits took a large and lucid view of human inconsistency, never giving themselves over to it, but never on the other hand letting it overbear their reason and judgment, or derange their temper. Marcus Aurelius praised his predecessor, Antoninus Pius, as not having in him "anything, one may say, *carried to the sweating point*," and this was great praise. But as radicalism is commonly understood —and indeed as it commonly takes shape in the social bearing of its professors—one sees profound penetration in the paragrapher who lately remarked that—

> The true radical is a man that thinks you are against him if you can't get as excited as he does.

But a man who has the sense of time as a factor in education, and the sense of the amount of development necessary to create a world governed by realism, or even to make oneself at home in such a world, cannot get excited. He quietly takes his stand with the king's jester, shares his realistic view, and does what can be done to further it by a method analogous to his. For it is the only method that is effective. One of our paragraphers says most profoundly that—

> Another thing we have noticed in our journey through this old vale of tears, etc., is that anything that has to be protected from being laughed at, deserves to be.

Just so. We all know that our pretense is protective. Our diligent pretense about politics, statesmanship, the tariff, the American standard of success, the League of Nations, and so on—all this, as in Hans Christian Andersen's fable of the king's new clothes, is a protective device to keep a laughable thing from being laughed at. But the method of crusading against pretense, arguing against it, inveighing against it, is relatively ineffectual. It is a method inevitably handicapped by the personality and temper of those who use it. On the other hand, men like our paragraphers, as has been well said, mightily help along the cause of truth "without encumbering it with themselves." Their method is impersonal, unevangelical, persuasive, and disarming; all their shrewdness, their radicalism, their experienced, realistic sense of the plain natural truth of things, find free play. They arouse no animosities, alarm no pride of opinion, nor do they seek to beat a person off his chosen ground—under their influence his ground imperceptibly changes with him. One must be aware that in respect of pretense and make-believe, as in other respects, human perfectibility has a long way to go. We may well believe it will go the full distance, and in that assurance we may well wish to help all we can in the process. The only question is, how best to do it; and here it would seem that the function of the king's jester and his modern counterpart affords a very profitable and interesting study in method.

BEAUTY AND RELIGION

BY AVIS D. CARLSON

I USED never to go to church without wondering if the grave-looking beings about me had any notion of how very difficult it is just now for an intelligent young person to be religious or even to have any real understanding of what religion is. When I tried to talk about that difficulty with people known to be "religious" they became severe or petulant or so evidently hurt that I was soon hushed. This blind spot which I was always finding in the faithful ceased to puzzle me only when I suddenly realized that almost all the "religious people" I knew were born a decade or more before the twentieth century came in—that is, that they went through childhood and adolescence when in most layers of society it was still the conventional thing to be religious, when names like Ingersoll and Paine still produced a shudder of revulsion or hatred. This generalization was not particularly fresh or original, and with a little wit I might have made it a good deal sooner. But it helped me not only to understand the attitude of religionists, but also to appreciate the odds ironically heaped against the young person who would like to enter into a phase of human experience which has been only less universal than the mating impulse.

To-day the tide of convention has turned. It is now, one may almost say, conventional to be indifferent to religion. It is more or less the fashion for young people to deny any leanings in that direction. Much of what used to be called "religious discourse" they hoot at as cant; many of the old modes of behavior, such as regular church attendance and rigorous abstinence from amusements on Sunday, they think of as habits appropriate, perhaps, for one's elders, but in one's contemporaries indicative of provinciality. The easy and proper thing is to be indifferent. The present generation of college students does not take even its agnosticism so seriously as we did ten years ago.

And yet the idea of religion remains a perpetual challenge to everyone who is mentally alive. The other day a young woman who had been reading one of the great modern discussions of prayer put it down with a despairing sigh. "The whole business of religion bothers me. I can't understand it, and all the writers just throw around words which sound pretty but are as meaningless as so much Chinese. And yet I am always feeling that if there is anything in it all, I ought to be in on it."

Her problem is the problem of thousands of her contemporaries. Conventional religion they rightly despise as thin and inconsequential; besides, as I have just said, the pressure of convention is no longer firmly in the direction of religion. Many of what used to seem essential phases of religion they reject entirely and have good theological precedent for so doing. The authority of a sacred institution and a sacred book has been shaken by the graduates of the best Protestant seminaries. Our most carefully trained churchmen are declaring that submission to the institution and the book is not religion, although co-operation with the one and intelligent use of the other are helpful means in the re-

ligious life. Neither is intellectual assent to a body of dogma the real thing in religion, say these liberal leaders, although an active mind cannot in the long run avoid building something like a creed as it attempts to cast its experience into an intellectual mold. And finally, they insist, the social aspect of religion is in itself not the real thing: social consciousness is almost invariably heightened by the religious experience, but ethical rectitude or even altruism at its peak is not religion. Tradition, dogma, morality—all are aspects of religion but none is the real thing. Not even all of them together make up the real thing.

All this fits in well enough with the mood of hosts of individuals who came into existence with the turn of the century or later. They are impatient with each of the three: with tradition because so much of it is not attractive; with dogma because so much of it will not stand criticism; with morality because so much of it seems unintelligent or even designing humbug. And yet they keep feeling with my friend that there may be something, indeed, that there *must* be something else in religion to have so attracted and influenced humanity through the ages. This feeling they find emphatically confirmed in the best of the modern writers on the subject.

But when these liberal religionists go to putting into words what they conceive to be the real thing, they must contend with one of the most difficult problems of expression, for they are, as someone said, dealing with the imponderables; and to make the imponderables understandable, much less *real*, requires genuine poetic insight and sensitiveness combined with technical skill in the use of words, a combination which not many people possess—certainly not many people with theological training. And the rare person who has those tools is confronted with a still bigger problem. For to deal successfully with imponderables, one must have an audience fitted by temperament or education to understand imponderables. One who does not have something of the poetic nature cannot read poetry. One who does not love form and line cannot enjoy sculpture. Who thinks there is no more in life than can be fingered and arithmetically valued cannot follow another who speaks of matters which cannot be fingered and arithmetically valued, that is, of imponderables. But those are the very things of which the liberal religionist must speak, and the very things which young people, the audience he naturally seeks, are least able to comprehend.

II

This spiritual dullness has been the subject of many an eloquent sermon and magazine article in the last decade. The general consensus of opinion seems to be that young people are animated by pure perversity, or in the good Middle Western colloquialism, "general cussedness." They have looked about, these perverse young people, and discovered the way which all the ages have marked out as spiritually proper, and then they have wilfully set their faces in another direction. Such a view of the matter is nonsense. If a generation is spiritually sluggish the reason is to be found not in the actions of individuals but in the conditions of the day itself. And surely, when one comes to examine that, no day was ever harder to find religion in. A wealth of tradition and dogma is at hand and, the critics to the contrary, even a goodly store of morality is about; but to come upon that inner essence, that "real thing" which religious liberals are stressing, is a most difficult matter.

Nothing in his experience prepares the young person to understand it, much less grasp it for his own. He has come up in a home which, eight chances out of ten, was either careless and indifferent religiously or merely conventional and dogmatic. If the first, he was thrown on outside influences for his religious shaping; and probably not even they intervened until after he was four or five years old, a dangerously late age, ac-

cording to psychologists and the Roman Catholic church. If the faith of his parents was conventional or dogmatic, he sooner or later found himself in revolt and in a feeling of superiority to the whole of religion. In neither case did he have a chance to grow up religiously sensitive, or as the behaviorists love to say, "conditioned."

But that is not all or even the worst of it. His whole school training has been in another direction. Education has been so afraid of being sectarian that it has disdained almost the entire realm of the emotions. It has aimed to teach individuals to weigh and measure and value the ponderables. The tots in the grades learn to add little sums, to use rulers and pencils, to spell and to read. The high-school student is taught to do more complicated mathematical stunts, to learn the grammatical forms of a foreign language or two, to know the most important events in American history, to write objective little themes, to think of literature as something to be studied and analyzed line upon line, comma upon comma. In college the aim is to pack him up with more facts and give him more elaborate means of charting a ponderable universe. The whole school idea is to create a well-informed citizenry. It is not at all concerned with values like a glint of sunshine on a blackbird's wing, the haze of twilight and smoke which make the narrowest of city canyons mysteriously lovely, the welling up of a love which transcends the beloved and overflows upon every casual passer-by, the desolate moments when one seems alone in an indifferent universe, and the other moments when though alone we seem most accompanied. From the kindergarten to the Ph.D. there is next to nothing in the schools to sensitize one to values such as these. And without that sensitivity, one is lost to any discussion of the real thing in religion.

Nor is that all. Professor Whitehead in his arresting little book, *Religion in the Making*, remarks that "religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness . . . if you are never solitary you are never religious." Perhaps the statement is a picturesque exaggeration, but it has a fundamental truth which every great religious leader has emphasized. The wilderness and Gethsemane are symbols not likely to be outgrown in the religious life. But how is the urban youth to be solitary to-day? At college he works surrounded by people, eats with forty or fifty others, goes out to a crowded dance or movie house, comes back to sleep in a dormitory. He is rarely away from people for even a half hour at a time. When he comes out of college the situation is not much different. He rides to work in a crowded street car or subway, or if he drives his own car his mind is upon all the pedestrians and other drivers whom he must avoid. For eight hours he works in the midst of other workers. He lunches in a place buzzing with the noise of feeding humanity. If he dines at home he is still not alone. Even if he does not go out after dinner, the radio with its jazz from New York and Los Angeles can be depended on to keep him from solitariness. When he has the chance to be alone he is apt to run from it. He has had no training in aloneness. Aloneness is emptiness so far as he is concerned—a nagging, painful emptiness which he cannot tolerate.

The churches are no help in the matter of solitariness. Sunday school classes, discussion groups, circle and board meetings, "social hours," sermons addressed to full pews—unless one has already learned the art of solitariness in the midst of throngs, most churches are a downright obstacle to the solitariness which the ages have found essential to the religious life.

But, someone says, perhaps Whitehead did not mean physical aloneness. I think that quite likely. But how is one to learn to be solitary in a group when his whole life has hardly had an hour free from distraction? Honest communion with oneself is possible only

when the self is somewhat removed from the blare of lights and traffic. Pleasant communion with oneself is possible only when the self has some resources of its own for entertainment. Every great invention which has been made in the last thirty years has tended to throw us into closer contacts, to rush us pellmell into greater herds, to give us collective emotions with their vigorous, easy "kick," and to preserve us from "the awful ultimate fact, which is the human being, consciously alone with itself, for its own sake."

If Whitehead, and before him the long line of religious thinkers who have emphasized the part played by solitariness in religion, are right, then someone might well cry, "How hardly shall one born of the twentieth century enter into the kingdom of heaven!" Creatures of a day when there is little vital faith in anything, when the educative process is aimed at the accumulation of facts, when life grows always more externalized, how are we to make any approach to religion, "the art of the internal life"?

Religionists are for the most part too much occupied with quarreling over whether or not we shall have literal interpretation of the Scriptures, and with increasing or maintaining their church membership lists to be much concerned with this, the fundamental problem they should be endeavoring to solve. Perhaps there is no solution. Perhaps it is presumptuous for me even to assert the existence of the problem when so many of the great men of religion speak glowingly of the boon radio is to religion. But I know how difficult the problem seemed to one child of the twentieth century. And because she seems to me so like numbers of her generation, I want to outline the approach she finally made.

III

She grew up in a home which was rather more than conventionally religious. From the time she can remember she was sent faithfully to Sunday school and kept faithfully at church. Later she was taken to the annual revivals, those little excitements which bubbled up for a fortnight and then subsided easily. Some kind of a childish faith in the all-right-ness of things and in a kindly super-Santa Claus she had, but nothing more. During adolescence she had moments of passionate aspiration to do something noble and to find the peace which she heard ministers declare to pass understanding. But mostly she was too busy with her pony and piano and basketball and algebra problems and chums to be seriously affected by the "sense of sin" which had descended darkly upon adolescents in all the Christian centuries up to the twentieth. In fact, it had never been impressed upon her that she was sinful; preachers talked of sin, but it never seemed real to her. Horses, games, lessons, and boys who must be attracted were the real things.

At seventeen she went to college, unfortunately a denominational school which in those years was too pious. In her rebellion against the smugness of that atmosphere she cleared out the super-Santa Claus and various tag-ends of theology as briskly and thoroughly as if she had gone to the most "godless" of state universities. Then she set to work to find something wherewith to furnish her nicely swept house. Numerous words were floating around to attract youngsters like her in those days: democracy, service, progress, the life stream. She took them all into her clean, bare house. But the years after 1918 were waiting for her. In thirty months she lost as fine a set of illusions and faiths as were ever assembled. And then she was ready to start with people six or eight years her junior who had never had any faiths or enthusiasms at all.

For a time she got a certain hard joy out of her new picture of the universe. At last, she felt, she had touched the bedrock of reality. If the world was only a tremendous machine set going nobody knew when or to what purpose she was glad to know it and to despise it as it de-

served. If the human intelligence was only a crazy shadow dancing to the tune of whatever crazy piper played loudest, if Progress was only the watchword of persons who talked of tolerance and joined the Ku Klux Klan, she preferred to know it. If she herself was only a collection of atoms at the mercy of the circumstances which had and would shape it, she was glad to know that too. In this period life was very external and gay: it was easy to make witticisms at the pointlessness of everything.

But after a while the quips did not come so easily. She was bored. She worked harder than ever; for work and love seemed the only reliefs available. She read Carlyle who said that work is man's only business and only salvation, but she didn't agree: she saw too clearly that most of the work which goes on in the world is solely for the purpose of gaining food and shelter and amusement. Neither could she agree with the romancers who said that love is man's only business and salvation, because though she was happily in love, she was still bored. Sometimes she had fits of reading religious literature, but it always bewildered her. Its vocabulary was strange, its mood foreign, its logic often very bad. Occasionally she went to church, but it too bewildered her. Over and over again she decided there was nothing for her in religion, and then after a while she would get to wondering what could have so attracted humanity as to make it "incurably religious."

She took to reading the histories of the origin and growth of religion which were beginning to appear in considerable numbers, and found that anthropologists and psychologists were inclined to trace the origin back to the savage's fear of the unknown and unknowable which was forever threatening him with destruction in every lightning thrust and drouth and attack of animals or fellow-savages. She saw how carefully that motive of fear had been fostered by religious organizations, but she knew that for her and her generation it was meaningless. She knew, too, that utility or the desire to work the god had also been a powerful motive, but she despised that also . . . her Yankee forbears had been of the firm conviction that God helps them that help themselves. And so from both the traditional and the historical avenues approach was simply impossible.

About that time two things happened to her. She discovered symphony orchestras and she came in contact with a scholar and gentleman who asserted the existence of spiritual realities and who had the gift of expression to make her dimly perceive what he meant. The orchestra for two hours swept her out of herself into a new heaven and earth; the scholar-gentleman spoke of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness so often that the words became alive and meaningful for her. Like most of her contemporaries, she had not bothered much about Goodness. The one thing her college training had done for her spiritually was to make the ideal of Truth compelling. Beauty she had always loved in the inarticulate, rather shamed American way. She began now to seek it, and to make blundering little attempts to create it in the media to which she had access. Progress was slow, for she had no advisers and did not herself clearly understand what was happening to her. She still had whole days of cynicism and disgust when existence seemed futile and the universe a bit of ghastly irony. But she grew to be alert for a flash of loveliness in a face or the outline of a tree. Her senses became more delicate, and she found beauty in more and more unexpected places. On a rainy night in one of the ugliest towns in Illinois, for instance, she was suddenly overwhelmed with the magical beauty of the pools of yellow light which shimmered in long misty columns on the pavement. Every time she thus fell into what she later found to be dignified by the philosophic term "æsthetic experience" she came out loving the object which had delighted her.

One more step remained. She had still to learn that beauty lies everywhere

waiting to be perceived. When she began to understand that with her own imagination she could unsheathe beauty in almost any object she found herself thrilling to a new sense of the tremendousness of life and a new love for the whole gigantic spectacle unfolding to her opened eyes. She found herself quite involuntarily and instinctively investing it with spiritual meaning. Week by week the great show grew upon her, and she was more inclined to give herself to it and claim it for her own. She called it Life (always with the capital, for she had begun to personalize it as one does any loved object). And she loved it as naturally and as hungrily as she had loved her first sweetheart.

One day she turned to the written records of Jesus and it seemed to her she understood the words of the great teacher. To-day she is aware that many of the religionists of her acquaintance think of her as deplorably irreligious. The idea amuses her.

IV

Some readers, if I am so fortunate as to have any, will object that it is ridiculous to base an argument upon the case of one young woman even if in some respects she does seem typical. Others, brought up on the medieval idea that the approach to religion is by way of the intellect or on the nineteenth-century insistence that the gateway is through social morality, will be shocked and indignant. They will write me no end of letters reminding me of the moral looseness and intellectual skepticism—that is, the irreligion—of certain great artists. They will shake over my head that terrifying phrase "Art for Art's sake," and describe for me all the silly æstheticism which has flown that banner.

I shall not be perturbed, because in the first place I know that there are excellent philosophic arguments that religion has more in common with beauty than with the other spiritual values, and in the second place because I have felt the urge to pray and the urge to make a poem and have not always been able to tell them apart: sometimes the prayer turned out to be a poem, and more likely than not a poem with none of the earmarks of the "religious." Indeed, it was this similarity between my own religious and æsthetic experiences which led me to search for the philosophic arguments.

Since interest in both types of emotional experience is so rarely combined in single individuals, I had to consult professors of both religion and æsthetics, that is, specialists who were trying to get at the fundamental nature of one of these two great types of human experience. The results were interesting.

Here is a sheaf of definitions of religion, all of them phrased in the modern mood: "Religion is an adventure in comradeship with what is regarded as enduring within or underneath the drift and waste of time." (Otto) "Religion is world-loyalty." (Whitehead) "The last, the highest religious effort is to make a home of the universe, now and forever, here and through all infinity." (Clutton-Brock) "Its [religion's] quintessential core . . . which is the art of finding our emotional relationship to the world conceived as a whole . . . is all that here matters, and it is best termed 'mysticism,' the correct term for the relationship of the Self to the Not-Self, of the individual to a Whole, when, going beyond his own personal ends, he discovers his adjustment to larger ends, in harmony or devotion or love." (Ellis) "Religion is a well-spring of character inspired by the assurance that something in the universe abides forever, grows and bears fruit at last, and that this eternal element is not the lowest dirt, but the loftiest personality." (Fosdick) "I am in the Father and the Father is in me." (Jesus)

The startlingly interesting discovery I made is that for every one of these definitions it is possible to balance one from the other camp. "Beauty is the world secret." (Plato) "In it the separation

between the end and the means, the idea and the object mentally penetrate each other." (Kant) "Beauty is, in the abstract, the unity of the manifold, the coalescence of the diverse." (Coleridge) "The æsthetic activity gives us a symbolic or imaginative vision of the universe, the premonition of a truth to be reached in its explicitness by science and philosophy." (Collingwood) "The beautiful object possesses those qualities which bring the personality into a state of unity and self-completion." (Puffer) "He who contemplates the beautiful forgets even his individuality, his will, and only continues to exist as the pure subject, the clear mirror of the object." (Schopenhauer) Surely I do not need to point out the obvious similarity between these definitions and those given in the last paragraph or to stress the fact that each of the claims here made for the æsthetic activity has also been made in almost the same words for the religious activity.

The more I have studied those series of quotations, the more fascinated have I been. Does it seem too daring to say that the religious and æsthetic experiences are one and the same thing? Perhaps. And yet the only difference I have been able to find in the two sets of analyses is the emphasis the first places upon the emotional reaction to the vision of the Whole. "Loyalty," "comradeship," "devotion and love" do not appear in the second set, although the two are equally insistent upon the idea of unity in diversity, the union of Self and Not-Self, subject and object. But everyone who has ever been genuinely stirred by a beautiful object knows how naturally the æsthetic experience passes over into loyalty and love. He can no more dam up his welling affection than he can add to or subtract from the length of his little finger.

I might draw up a neat column of quotations from artists themselves describing what they conceive to be the nature and purpose of their activity, and then in an opposite column list a series of statements from the great religious souls which would be so closely parallel as to startle one out of the stupid notion that religion and art are mutually indifferent or hostile. But without going through that rather pedestrian exercise, I have to say that all the reading I have done has tended to confirm my feeling that if we are going to have any religion in the twentieth century we shall get it by way of a deepened and broadened love of beauty; that, in spite of the artificial antagonisms which have been set up between them, they are more akin in nature and aim than any other two phases of spiritual experience.

Let me summarize their points of likeness. They both deal with the most basic and elemental portion of human nature, the emotions. They both move directly through feeling, disdaining the subtleties of logic. They both seek to reconcile the warring elements in existence, to stamp across the face of the universe unity and harmony, to bring meaning out of chaos, unity out of diversity, harmony out of discord. By sinking the Self into the Not-Self they both produce relief from the alone-ness which is the curse of consciousness. And more strangely still, their method in attaining this self-forgetfulness is exactly the same: by transmuting the Not-Self into a glorious whole to which the Self *can* go out in delight.

So much for definitions. They are interesting and impressive, but to me not so telling as the words of people who are not philosophers and, therefore, not in the least concerned with definition, who are simply trying to express their own reactions to life. Here are four from four acquaintances of mine who are as unlike in temperament and slant at life as any four people I know.

An artist friend whose major prophet is Edna St. Vincent Millay and whose Ten Commandments are the latest theories of line and design: "Go to church when there are woods within walking distance? I am too anxious to feel God to do that."

A brilliant young clergyman: "Do you

know, I think you're right about it. I have sometimes been bothered by my inability to see any qualitative difference in the way I feel when I pray and the way I feel when I listen to a really good violinist. In both experiences I simply melt out into infinite power and beauty."

A Catholic university-freshman, six feet tall, a football enthusiast, and one of the worst spellers it was ever my misfortune to teach, discussing the subject often handed out in composition courses, "Why I do or do not go to church": "I know that lots of young people do not go to church, but I think I am glad I am a Catholic and have to, for during mass I get a feeling which I love. The only other time I ever get it is when I am hiking and come to the top of a long hill and look out over a whole countryside. My heart beats solemnly and I almost stop breathing. Everything I have been interested in drops away, and I almost forget that I am I."

A teacher who was brought up in the most orthodox of Methodist homes: "Since I have had any personal religious feeling I have always identified it with beauty. You see, to me the term God includes tenderness and ineffable beauty, quite understandable in terms of a sunset or a poignant chord of music. And when I really pray I have the same feeling that one of those experiences invokes, except that to the music or the sunset is always coupled the sense of a great outgoing and in-coming love. In other words the beauty is personalized."

I could go on at length with these personal testimonies, but I refrain. Anyone who cares to go about, Socrates-like, quizzing people about their religious and æsthetic emotions can soon collect some interesting analyses, always provided he asks religionists and æsthetes who have observed themselves frankly and felt with their own hearts, instead of placidly accepting the conventional creeds and formulæ, the little lingoes and jargons of religion and art. He will find, I venture to assert, that in some individuals they merge into each other until it is impossible to break them into two separate experiences; that in other individuals who, being religious, scorn beauty, or, loving beauty, scorn religion, the one experience serves for the other.

Shelley, loving beauty madly and dismissed from college on a charge of atheism, is the classic case in point; for if there is a question sure to be asked in a survey course in English literature, it is, "Why couldn't people see that Shelley's stuff is religious?" It is no accident that if tested by the definitions I have listed in this essay, most of our good English poetry is religious in mood. The words "God," "heaven," "immortality," and so on may not often appear, but from the unknown authors of Beowulf to Masefield English poets have been trying to "appreciate life's meaning as a whole, to clothe the bare facts of life with radiant meanings, to perceive in them eternal worth and significance." The driest and prosiest of professors of English literature will insist upon that. And yet those are the very words by which one of the greatest of contemporary churchmen tries to express the aim and function of religion. What he has failed to say is that the neglect of our educative process to sensitize the child to beauty may be one of the chief causes of the present well-nigh universal indifference to religion.

There can be no doubt that both religion and the love of beauty are having rather a bad time of it in this age of machines and high-powered sales methods. If they should close the senseless breach which opened between them at the beginning of the modern age, might they not reinforce each other and revivify each other in their effort to free the human spirit and give it abundant life? Each would have to shed its haughty exclusiveness and certain of its traditional dogmas. But together they might transform the twentieth century from something which is merely livable into something richly satisfying.

MEAT

A NOVEL

BY WILBUR DANIEL STEELE

Part V

Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.—I Corinthians viii:13.

IT WAS on a Saturday evening in early September, just a week before India's holiday was to begin, that Anne broached at last the subject the contemplation of which he had been dreading, if only half-consciously, for nearly a quarter of a year. It was about Rex—Rex, and his need of doing something. She had thought it over; she had talked it all over with others. His father's own office seemed to everyone altogether the best place for him to begin. After the holiday, then?

When he had looked at the floor for a while India nodded.

"Very well." There was a sigh behind it. "I suppose you know, though, the responsibility you're asking me to assume."

"Why shouldn't you? Besides, Maynard Wills is all for it. You needn't worry about Rex; he'll do his work. I've a feeling he'll surprise you, Sam."

"It's not about the work. It's about —Bluntly, Anne, you know as well as I that there are a lot of things we've shielded him from. That stops when he goes to the city. You can lock up the bottles in our cellar, but you can't lock up the desks of every man down there with whom he'll come in contact. To say nothing of—well, still bluntly, Anne—stenographers."

Anne's eyes narrowed; the hint of an unwonted flush dyed her cheeks.

"The shame of it is, Sam, that you don't know anything about your own son. Worse than that you don't, you *won't*. Rex has gone through his mill here before your very eyes. You've chosen to shut them. His fight was won the day he realized it was a harder fight than anyone's else, the day he accepted the fact that he had to be better, stronger, and carefuller than others have to be. It's taken nearly twenty years, but now you've a son that's a grown man. Take him, look at him, and thank God, Sam India. And do your worrying about those other fathers' sons, sneaking their illicit whiskey out of their dirty speak-easies into their desks down there. Rex can take care of himself. Perhaps there'll come a day when he can take care of—someone else."

The clear, devoted, pitiless passion of it attacked his doubt.

"I didn't know it could be done," he said.

"What?"

He started upstairs, returned half way, hesitated, repeated to himself, "I didn't know it could be done," then turned to climb again. On his way to his room he faltered for an instant in face of his son's door.

India wanted to know the truth, even if it hurt him. That was his weakness.

"I wonder. Is it true I've deliberately chosen to close my eyes? For it

is true I don't know a single thing on earth about that boy in there."

It followed him, even to bed, the symbolism of that closed door with the silent boy shut in behind it. He could not sleep. In the windless night, which grew more and more oppressive, he heard from passing cars the voices, the hails, and laughter of young people. These made him think of Flagg and Fern, and for a moment re-evoked that bitterness. But then his mind slid away again.

"I *have* been honest. That doesn't mean necessarily that I've been right. If I've been wrong I suppose as a decent father I ought to be very glad."

He got up finally and roamed. He went into the hall and stood in the dark again before that door. Anne was right; he had never put out a hand to open it. He had never once looked in to see who it was that was there.

No one was there.

When he had turned the knob softly and thrust his head into the room, that fact at first seemed only metaphorical, a dramatic answer to his questioning, startling, complete. Like the slang phrase, "Nobody home."

There was enough moonlight at the windows to show him that the bed had not been slept in. He entered, though, to make sure. Only after a minute or so did the fact of Rex's material absence strike him as cause for mystification and alarm.

Returning to his own room, he dressed, after a fashion, pulling his outer garments on over his pajamas. He thought for a wink he had been taken in, when, out in the hall once more, he saw a shadow stirring.

"Is that you, Rex?"

It was Anne's voice that came back, pitched queerly. "Where is Rex?"

"I don't know."

As India went down the stairs something deep at the back of his brain fell to ticking, the clockwork of an infernal engine he had been carrying around on him for months without ever once guessing it.

Tick, tick, tick; it led him down one flight.

Tick, tick, tick, tick; down a second, and under the ground.

Reason had its moment. In face of the wine-room oak, thick as a wall itself and locked as it had been for years now with that unique key which India's fingers could feel among the others on the ring in his trousers pocket, he shook his head savagely to clear it of that ticking.

"What in the name of all the silly devils!"

But then, in a flash which would have seemed altogether fortuitous, he saw himself in a railway coach. Before him he saw the faces of the inquisition, Mr. Fred Paula and the Reverend Mr. Cornhouse. He was holding out the ring, withering them with his dry and scornful attestation ". . . the only key in the world that would unlock that door. . . ." "Continuously in my possession."

Tick, tick, tick, tick.

Was it the only key? Memory skipped. There had been another. Anne had thrown it away, into the long grass, or the shrubberies, somewhere. Where had Rex been? Think! He had been standing out there beside Flagg, confused, abashed, and sullen, his gaze (when India looked) fixed on the valley below.

India bent to study the film of coal dust on the cement floor. Now he saw in front of his own feet two footprints and half of a third. The missing fraction of that third one was hidden between the sill and the bottom of the oaken door. One of the whole ones pointed toward it; the other away.

He unlocked the door, swung it wide, switched on an interior light. No coal dust in here; an army of intruders would not have left a trace. The wine-racks? Gaps. Yes, but no telling. The spirits-racks?

Tick, tick, tick. And that was the end of the ticking. The infernal machine in India's brain went off.

"Steady!" he told himself when he had relocked the door. "There's no use in your—" The flame of the interior explosion lighted everything red. He still tried. "Remember, poor fellow, it's no fault of his."

Anne was at the head of the cellar stairs.

"Go on back to bed," he told her.

He went out by the kitchen door. When he had crossed the yard and got up into the beginning of the woods he heard her following.

The moon, still high in the west, was as broad across as seven moons. For moments it dimmed, then for moments glowed again. Glowing, it gave off long, sharp rays, long vacillating spines of green-white light. While these lasted, Rex's thoughts flew up and climbed about among them, nimble as so many monkeys through the tree-tops of heaven. But when the branches were reabsorbed into the failing moon, they came back to roost with him on his elm stump in the sloping glade. Then he, too, rested through the slack of the night's pulse, his shoulders drooped, his eyes clouded, his feet hanging down heavy from his sylvan throne.

But even through these intervals of semitorpor the continuity of delight was never broken. With thoughts as nimble as monkeys you can spy down through the roof of the leaves into the secret chambers beneath the leaves, like a god. But if you're a god you've no need even of monkey thoughts; you've the all-penetrating, the all-comprehending ear.

The fall of a feather, the bruising of a leaf, the crackle of a grass-blade hidden away in the summer dark. . . . Breathings, heavy, light, rapid, drawn out long as a sleeper's sighs. Laughter, thin as a little string, aimless as hysteria, befuddled. . . . Remonstrance, befuddled too, but thick as a club, "F' Chri-sake, Amy, cut out the cacklin'. Want to get the whole town up here?"

The laughter loudening, despite itself. Runaway giggles. The sound of a buffet. A hush for a moment behind the hangings of the undergrowth. Then weeping and sobbing, sobbing and weeping.

Then sobbing and weeping from quite another quarter of the encircling grove, "Oh, no! Oh, no! Lis'en to that; Bert's beatin' up Amy. Where's he think—he gets—that stuff? Oh, no! Oh, no! You're all like that—you fellahs are—no, you don't touch me—you le'me be. I wish I was dead."

So it went, inevitably, the pulse of a summer night like this. Health, youth, the golden trembling beatitude of whiskey and love, the bright palaces of the dark. Then, between two winks, without warning, like a wind sweeping soundlessly through the wood, loathing and terror, dirt and pain. "I wish to God I was dead. I wish I was dead."

"Gi'me a drink, f' Chri-sake! Go ask the Prince of Wales out there; he's got another bottle yet, somewheres hid."

"He says he ain't."

"The hell he ain't! Tell him I'm sick, I got to have it. Oh, my God! I don't feel good. Who are you, anyways? What you done? Where are we at? How'd I ever come here?"

The moon, recuperated, was swelling again. Swiftly the streamers of its shine shot out, pale interweaving branches for apes to cavort in. Now Rex, though he moved neither hand nor foot nor changed by a wrinkle the mask of his ascetic detachment and his pharisaical disdain, felt passing through all his flesh the shiver of a peculiar ecstasy, a slow, rhythmic knotting and release of the nerves. His flying thoughts jubilated.

"Let them suffer! Let them pay! The pigs, the sots, the sluts, they asked for it. It's nobody's fault but theirs."

He got his slate-colored eyes down from the moon branches to study the fellow they called Cap' Johnnie, lying on his back in the long grass of the clearing, almost in the shadow of the stump. A tall, powerful man in his

thirties, a machinist in the thread mills, handsome as an Adonis in a careless, adventurous, bruising way. He had got too much whiskey too early; a half hour ago he had fallen there like a harvested tree, his mouth wide open and his eyes a little open at the moon. Occasionally he would choke, snore in gasps, loudly, for a time, then lie as dead as wood again.

The rhythmic tensing and flexing of Rex's nerves heightened pace.

"Look at you," he apostrophized the sleeper. "Then look at me."

The sight of that great male beauty turned into a rubbish heap of flesh, of that muscled vitality stricken impotent at his feet, swept Rex with alternate waves of frost and flame. His heart pounded, distended with an exquisite pain.

"Look at you! It would have been so easy for you to be straight and strong. It would have been so easy for me to be crooked and wobbly. But now look at you there and look at me here. Look, look, look!"

For an instant a fumbling paralysis tried to take hold of the boy's sinews, but he fought it off. He had a desire to get down and kick dirt and twigs over the recumbent giant, but he fought that off too. He sat immovable above the sins of the world. . . .

Two forms came out of the woods, a fellow and a girl. The fellow, leading, lifted his feet high at each stride, as though stepping over logs. The girl was placing one foot in the way of the other, as though she were dancing the old "grape-vine." Both had an air of mussed heaviness, their clothing awry.

The fellow stood in front of Rex's stump, his legs propped wide, his arms akimbo. "Come on, give us a drink; be a sport." He shot his chin out and drooped his lids. "Now, listen, don't try that stuff about there ain't any more."

Rex weighed him with only the briefest of glances. Then his eyes, passing on to the girl, ran slowly from head to feet of her dishevelment.

"Hey! Hey! Hey!" The fellow stepped over another of his invisible logs, his hands working.

"You wait!"

Rex was too busy with the girl to be bothered. With his mask of contemptuous detachment still whole, but with an inner avidity, he marked detail by detail the stigmata of surfeit and corruption. The grass stems in the frowse of yellow hair, the wrinkled garments, the ugly hang of lips that had overpassed their ripeness.

Voluptuary, Rex began now to tie up the ends of his night. Vicarious indulgence finds satiety too. But how different from theirs was this fill of his. "I've not done anything I shouldn't. I've not touched anything, anything. Thank God, there's nothing I'll have to be sorry for in the morning."

He turned back to the fellow. "Nothing doing. You're all of you rotten stinking drunk, and you make me sick. Go home now, all of you, or at least get off this property. *Gah!* If you could see yourselves!"

The fellow was too nearly done for. It took his brain a while to understand. With his dull eyes, his gaping mouth, his Saturday collar wilted, and the made-up bow hanging from it by its rubber string, there he stood trying. Perhaps the meaning of the words never did get to his brain, but only as far as the muscles of his arms and shoulders. A snarl came out of his mouth. Lifting both fists he started forward to murder.

There was only one thing Rex could do, and that was to sit unmoved and stare him between the eyes. Now, of a sudden, he was terrified. But even in terror he found a curious thrill. He foresaw the fist descending, forefelt the impact crushing his skull in on the left side, previsioned himself toppling, lying dead on the ground in the moonlight, on his dead lips the slight, voluptuously-disdainful smile of martyrdom.

The pain in his head was no bigger than a dime, but dazzling. It was only after some instants that he began to

realize that, far from being murdered, he had not even been struck, not touched at all. He perceived his assailant lying supine across the legs of the other sleeper, Cap' Johnnie, his diaphragm fluttering with a kind of silly mirth as he passed out toward dreamland. And he beheld the girl, who had caught and tripped the beast in time, standing there alone before his tree-stump throne, her eyes blazing-awake again, her shoulders, pale-naked where the brawl had torn her dress away, convulsed with her panting.

"Kid," she cried, "why don't you never?"

It startled Rex. His mouth fell open. Next instant, though, he closed it, drawing the lips thin around the teeth.

"Why don't I what?"

She advanced a step. The child of French-Italian people in the thread mills, she used her shoulders. "Why don't you like me? Ever since I first seen you, you good-lookin' boy you, I wished— Why don't you never?"

"Do you mean with—*you?*" A sneer trembled on his mouth. "You? *Gah!*"

She came on till her weight was against his knees. She spoke fiercely:

"I'm not so bad, and you know it, boy. I'm not dead yet."

Ecstasy laid hold of him. "You will be, though; dead of drink and disease within ten years."

She caught her breath. She turned a wild gaze around her, at the black shadows among the tree trunks, at the two men making the shape of a gibbet with their bodies on the ground. Tears came flooding out from between her lids, and she began to sob. Of a sudden she swayed forward and caught Rex's neck in the double circle of her arms. Her strength was enormous. Nothing Rex could do was of any use against it. His shoulders in chancery, he found his head pinned, his face pressed heavily into the fullness of the flesh beneath her collar bone—woman flesh, smothering his eyes, flattening his nostrils, stopping his open mouth. Two measures beating against his face, like the counterplay of two dissonant drums in a humid darkness, the rapid drum of her heart, the big, slow drum of her sobbing.

When she let him go, as abruptly as she had caught him, and turned and walked away toward the trees, Rex slid from the stump and followed her. For the first time in memory his face looked naked.

He began to despair of catching her, his knees wobbled so and his feet had grown so large. They tripped over the legs of the top one of the sleepers and threw him down. For a moment he lay there. He opened and shut his hands and ran his tongue around his lips.

The moon's corona covered a quarter of the sky, wavering flames. Rex got up. The girl, who had paused at the entrance to the shadow to look back at him, turned when she saw him afoot again and went on in.

The pain was all gone from Rex's head. His feet were no longer too ponderous to lift. The trouble now was that they were too light. They were no longer on the ground, but inches above it. He could go through the motions of walking and running but, having no purchase on anything, these motions got him nowhere. Still he kept working his hands and his newly limbered face, running his tongue all the while around the edges of his lips.

He heard his name called from the right, the downhill side of the glade. Twisting his head, he saw his father and mother standing there, just clear of the woods. He made a grimace at them, and then returned to his task of getting on. If he couldn't get on, in another minute, he was going to be deathly sick.

"*Rex!*" It was his mother again.

He turned away this time, suddenly and dizzily frightened. Finding his soles on earth again, he walked straight back to the stump and climbed up on it. His fright continued to grow and with it that dizziness. He wanted to be sick, but a paralysis had taken hold of his stomach and gullet.

He was becoming very small. So

was the moon. It had lost its crown of streamers and stood there as hard as a China marble.

They were coming to get him. His father. His mother.

The moon gave off a particle. Out of its whiteness a red corpuscle sprang. For the thousandth of a second, with the zigzag vacillation of lightning, it cast and recast about the sky. Then, spying Rex at last, unerringly, it spun down and hit him on the head.

It bent him over backwards. Immediately, then, the weight of his body counterbalanced the weight of his legs. So he went over the rear of the stump in a summersault and lay in a pile on the ground.

And Rex India was dead.

Sam India was fifty-four years old, yet he carried his son's body down as far as the stepping-stones in White Brook in one lift. Then it was only the weakness which came with the reawakening of his brain that made him put his burden down.

The hideous pity of this thing. Poor boy! For a moment he was all the fathers that have ever lost their sons. He stood panting with it, his head hanging, tears running down his face.

Anne stood on the other side of the body. So far she had not made a sound. Her eyes were dry. When she did speak at length her voice was harsh.

"See what you have done, husband."

His tears were stopped. He squared his shoulders and straightened his legs, pity gone. Twenty years rose up. For the first time in his life Sam India saw red.

"What *you* have done, rather."

"*I!* Had I had my way, you know as well as I that this would never have happened. It was taking the whiskey that began it. But Rex would never have taken the whiskey up there, simply because he would never have known what whiskey was. He would never have known what it was because there would never have been any to know."

"Where?"

With a stiff arm, the straight sword of the angry angel, Anne swept the air before her.

"Anywhere! Ever! If women are to be asked to bear sons in pain—"

"And daughters," India cut in. "For if you had your way, Anne, there would be no daughters, no girls. Girls are another of the Devil's—"

"They too!" There was no instant of hesitation; the sword swept the air again. "No girls. I could kill them all, so gladly."

"And no beauty. No impulse. No desire."

"Beauty! Desire!" She stood and stared at him, as though his being able to pronounce those words at a time and in a presence such as this were a thing incredible.

He held his ground. Whitening, he met the stare across his dead son.

"These also have the right to be protected against their enemies," he said.

She continued to stare. But presently he saw that it was not at him she was staring. It was probable she had not heard his last words at all. Something swift, subtle, and terrible was happening to Anne.

Once she lifted a hand and passed it over her eyes.

She bent and touched the object on the grass. No one would have known the voice for hers. "Is Rex dead?"

She straightened and again put her hand in front of her eyes. Then she looked to the right and to the left.

"Where is—"

She hesitated.

"Where are—"

She tried another way, looking down at the body.

"That's finished, then."

India stepped over quickly and put an arm around her.

"Anne, Anne! No! It's all right. I'm here."

Once more his eyes ran tears. For they had seen her being broken on the table like the cup a king has drained,

seen her withering like a fruit-rind thrown away.

It was as if, a benevolent wizard having withdrawn the protection of his enchantment, Anne found the wolves of the years upon her in a pack. At the age of fifty-one her life was changed in one overdue and violent act. Seeing her lying day after day in her bed, visibly graying and shrinking, her mouth seldom opening, her gaze never removed for long from the ceiling on which shadows and refracted lights painted the maps of worlds that never were, India was more and more oppressed by the conviction that her mind was graying and shrinking too.

But one afternoon, late, when the lengthening light came into the room full of the green of leaves, Anne turned her head on the pillow and looked at him where he sat near the bed.

He was startled. Something moved in the pit of memory.

"Why, Anne dear."

He was confused.

"Why, Anne India!"

He could not find the right words. The ones that came stammering from his mouth sounded inept and inane.

"Why, Anne, here you are."

That was it. It was the first time she had looked at him like that for twenty years.

But immediately, even before his happiness could shape itself in his mind, he felt the touch of a dismay as shapeless, an instinctive illness at his ease before so swift a reincarnation.

Anne spoke.

"Where are the children?"

"They're—they'll be all right. Flagg is coming home." He said it because he hoped it. "He—he ought to have been here by now."

"And Fern?"

"Well—Fern—Fern, Anne, is rather another—"

He got out of the deep chair and moved to a window. He stood looking out, his hands clasped behind him, conscious that her gaze had come after him, not importuning, but waiting.

"Yes," he said, making his voice hoarse for assurance, "Fern is coming too."

It was on a Monday afternoon, just before leaving the book shop, that Fern had had a long-distance call from Sam India. It was Thursday morning before she found Flagg.

He had left his job, that was the trouble. All they could tell her at the Hendrix shipping-sheds was that, on that same Monday, he had failed to put in an appearance. At his boarding-place she fared no better. Only once, since going out on Saturday, had he been known to return there, and then those below had simply heard him enter his room and leave it again, almost immediately.

What it was that carried Fern through that period of over sixty hours she would have found it hard to say. She would not have believed it possible that she could ever do the things she discovered herself doing, that she could suffer the contacts, accept the rebuffs she had to accept and, swallowing her pride till there seemed none left to be swallowed, go on insisting, imploring, to the end.

Was it the peculiar, and to her altogether novel, excitement of the man-hunt? There may have been a little of that, or there may have been not much. Perhaps it was fortunate she had no time to stop and wonder; perhaps she would have thrown it over and fled if she had. Perhaps, after all, it was simply that of a sudden she had something to do which was pressing, punishing, and fiercely centered on other lives than her own. It wants something as potent as this to explain the fact that, doing the thing calculated to make her the most miserable, if she was not positively happy, she was at least free for a while from an unhappiness which had given her no rest for months till now.

She found Flagg on Thursday morning, early, lying in the sun on the sand

at Revere Beach, not many rods from the spot where he and she had sat and talked and quarreled another time. At this hour the place was a travesty of holiday, peeling paint, red skeletons, and silence. A desert by the sea. Flagg was alone in it, his head aching, his stomach bad with the lees of five days' drinking, his soul sour with five days' fear of hell.

When she had sat down near him, spoken his name, and got a half-incredulous, obfuscated nod by way of recognition, she said, "Flagg, your brother is dead."

It brought him rolling over on his side to face her, a light of defense, at once crapulous and canny, between his sore-looking lids.

"Cut it out. I'm not as tight as you think I am."

Now that she had found him Fern felt suddenly and utterly used up. If he was going to ask her to fight him, on top of all the rest, there was nothing to do but quit. The lapping of the little waves along the sand and the serpents of sunlight winding with them were hypnotic. It would have been so easy to let go.

Ignoring his challenge, without emphasis she said, "Rex is dead, and your mother is ill."

"What of it?"

"Seriously ill. Your father is afraid, Flagg. You've got to go."

"Who says so?" Flagg squinted his eyes. There was a crease between them where the ache was splitting his head. "Who sent you after me?" He rolled his jaw. "Did she have the nerve? Or was it father?"

He flopped over on his back before she could answer.

"That's a good one!" It amused him; his diaphragm went up and down. To shield his eyes from the full beat of the sun he put his fists to them. "Excuse me, but that makes me laugh."

It was then that Fern came the nearest to giving up. She too lay back and put her hands over her eyes. The sand made a bed, quick and soft to shape about her, yet all of rock, inanimate, immaculate, wishless, a whole world thick. The whispering water whispered to itself alone, telling her nothing, asking nothing of her, letting her be. The sun that poured through her to the hollows of her bones was ninety million miles away. Give up. Forget.

But there was Flagg again.

"I'm not as tight as you think I am. What do you think you're doing down here? This particular place. What ever put it into your head I'd be— Say, was this it? Did you think, just because I was like this I'd be dumb enough to give you a chance to take another fall out of me—like that time? . . . That's a laugh . . . '*Touching*' you! . . . That's a laugh, all right, but it's on you, not me."

"Flagg, please."

"If you're trying to fool yourself into imagining there was anything—anything to do with you—us—or that night—any reason like that for my landing in this damn' place—why, the laugh is on you again, Fern. Because I didn't even *know* I was here at the beach till a little while ago, this morning."

"I know the laugh is on me, Flagg."

"Well, all right then."

"It's been on me more than once, Flagg. I've been here more than once since that night, and I've known I was here, and I've known why."

"Why? What's been the— Well, it's a free country."

"I've seen you in lots of other places, Flagg, when you didn't know it."

"And ran, I suppose, for fear I might forget myself again and 'touch' you."

"Oh, Flagg, dear, if you could only understand."

"I would what?"

"You would—well—you'd understand. That evening here, Flagg, I wasn't feeling— I was jumpy. I was upset, horribly. If you had only given me time to—to try to tell you—"

"I see it all, perfectly." Flagg shook his head, as if to make the ache hurt

worse. "It's as plain as day, so why bother. You're crazy about me, eh?"

"Listen, Flagg. I had to stop caring for anyone so early in my life that the only ones I've ever known what it was to care for I can still count on the four fingers of this hand. And this one, the first one, is you."

"Yes it is—not!" Flagg tried to curl a lip. "If you think I'll believe that!" He glowered into the top of the sky. He swallowed several times. Rolling over on his stomach he put his fists back in his eyes. It was minutes before he spoke again.

"What's this you're trying to tell me about Rex?"

"He's gone, Flagg. He died Saturday night."

"Poor kid. He never had a ghost of a show. What was it, Fern?"

"I don't know. I haven't asked, though I've talked with your father over the 'phone several times. And he hasn't said."

"I can't make it seem— Why, but then, what's mother going to do?"

"She wants to see you."

"See *me*? Who says so? Did she?"

"Yes."

"That's a good one." His back humped and subsided. For a while he lay as quiet as sleep. Once he appeared to remember himself and shook with more of those railing chuckles. "That's a good one, that is." Then, by and by, "You too, Fern. She said she wanted to see us both."

"Yes. But, but Flagg, I'm—"

The boy was on his feet, all in one jump. "Let's go!"

His face was a funny thing to see, his lips bitten, his wet eyes shining. He put out a long arm, a wide hand. "Come on, let's."

Fern, up too, caught herself in time and held her ground. But her head was shaking. "It's different with me. You go. There's a train at eleven at South Station; you can catch it by going straight there, so hurry, do."

"You mean—"

"You're the one, really, she wants to see."

Flagg's light went out.

"I knew there was a catch in it somewhere."

Stiffening his neck and gathering his brows, he looked the other way.

"I'd be a pretty sight, wouldn't I?"

"You might mean the difference between life and death to her, Flagg."

Only too late Fern perceived where that was leading.

"*I* would. *Yes*, I would." He seemed to remember something he had forgotten for a little while. Out of the bottoms of his eyes he studied his own dishevelment. "Look at me." Redness ran over his face. "I'd be a great help. They'd be proud to see me, wouldn't they, both of them? Not even a job left; nothing but a hangover."

Fern closed her eyes, tightly, tightly. She opened them again. She, this time, held out her hand.

"Come, Flagg, we've got to hurry."

"Nothing doing. It'd be bad enough even if you were there, and if you're not going—"

"Don't be a simpleton; of course I'm going. All I wanted—I wanted to be sure you wanted me to be."

"Look at me, Fern; is that straight?"

She was prepared. That was what she had been doing while her eyes were shut. So there was no sign of wincing or flinching when his hand, big and clumsy with eagerness, closed on hers. Only an inner astonishment.

("Why are you doing this? What is it to you whether he goes or doesn't go; whether that woman sees him or doesn't see him? How can you?")

("But after all, it'll soon be over. I'm only taking him as far as the station; anything to get him safely on a train. I guess I can.")

("Yes, but even that, even this; what right have you to ask it of yourself? Fern, you're a fool.")

Aloud, walking forward and leaving those clasped hands as far as she could behind and out of her sight and mind, she

said, "We'll have all we can do to make it, Flagg. I hear a car coming. Run."

Nothing had been farther from Fern's intention than this return to the house at Stonebridge. But once under way, once committed, even though in guile, she found that if she had counted on Flagg's being taken in by any subterfuge or put off by any last-minute compromise she was mistaken. She had learned something of this at the South Station, and more at Providence. Like a lost boy who has got his grip on a known hand again, Flagg was not going to let it go.

He slept the better part of the five hours on the train; it would have been lucky for her if she could have done the same. Perhaps he only appeared to sleep. For if she once dared to stir, if only to try at last to free the fold of her skirt from the fist-grip he had locked upon it, he stirred as quickly and frowned between his closed eyes, alert even in his half-unconsciousness to keep her from escaping.

Wretched as she was, sitting bolt up there hour by hour, captive against him, more than once the thought of the irony of things vouchsafed her the momentary relief of a thin, derisive smile.

"And to think that I'm the one they had to put out of the way. That young vampire. Poor boys."

They had to get down from the express at Bridgeport. It was Fern's last chance; here or nowhere she must take her stand. She was hoping, anyway, that between abstraction and the homesickness which, in his waking intervals, she seemed to see laying a stronger and stronger hold on him, his own momentum would serve to carry him on from there.

But once again she had over-guessed her own will power; under-guessed his. Once again she had to capitulate at the last moment, when it looked as though the Stamford Local were going to move out and leave him planted there on the platform with her, a two-legged mule.

"Yes, yes, all right then, I'm coming. I'll go as far as—"

"You'll go as far as home. Father would never get over it, and mother—mother, who's sick, who's dying, maybe—"

"She's your mother, Flagg, not mine. I've told you, I've told you, I've *told* you, it's *you* she wants to see."

"That's where you're crazy. You watch. You wait and see."

Fern couldn't help it then; for too many years she had weeded and watered this thin flower of her pride.

"I waited and I watched too long, Flagg. If ever once they had wanted—"

But then it was too late, for the train-step was moving, and she had to cry, "Well, well, come then; we'll see."

Whatever Flagg was to see, what Fern saw in the half hour following was that from the instant of that last giving-in their roles had been reversed. From then on it was Flagg that made the going; it was she that was carried along.

And yet it was she, when at last they stood in the shaded room and saw a gray-haired, strangely dwindled woman looking at them with clear eyes which were at once happy and inexpressibly sad, that did on impulse the better thing. When Anne India held out a hand, it was Fern that went forward and got down by the bed and took it in her own.

For a moment the two women looked straight and hard into each other's eyes, trying to read. Perhaps they did read.

"I'm sorry, Fern."

"I'm sorry, mother. I never understood."

They went on looking.

"I always knew you would turn out a beauty, child."

"No, an ugly."

"Rex is gone, Fern. When I am gone, everything will be all right."

"Mother!"

"Don't call me 'mother'."

"Why?"

"Because you must remember that I am not."

The woman's gaze got away from the girl's and passed over and beyond her to the two men in the corner by the door.

"No one has taken care of you, Fern. Take care of them."

"Flagg, son," she said, getting her other hand from beneath the covers.

And it was Flagg that, lowering his red face and looking down himself, turned out through the door and ran away.

India caught him in the lower hall and with a quickness that was like anger got between him and the outer door.

"What in the name of the devil, son!"

"What's it to you?"

"Come back upstairs."

"Why should I?"

"If for nothing but that your mother is as you've seen, and wants you."

"Me!" The boy sneered and thickened his voice, cocked ruffian elbows, preened in his bitter misery the rumpled feathers of his self-disesteem. "*Me!*"

"You need a shave and a brush, yes. And a bath. Then you'll be—"

"Then I'll be *what?* Still a bum. Still a souse with a hangover. So stop it."

Flagg clapped his palms to his temples and pressed as if he would have liked to crush them flat. He spit at the fireplace. "God's sake, give me a drink before I go, and then let me get out of here."

"A drink? Certainly, son. What would you like to have?"

Flagg's hands came tumbling down. He stared.

"Why not, if you want it?" India put on a look of mystification. "You're at home, aren't you? We've everything in the house, and everything in the house is yours."

"Father, you fool!"

India stepped forward and got hold of him, throwing an arm around the shoulders that were inches higher than his own. There was a new note in his voice now, of affectionate raillery.

"*You* fool. Come along with your dad."

Struck docile, Flagg let himself be led, upstairs and toward his mother's room, and then (he was grateful) past it and to his own.

He went down into a stuffed armchair. Where once he had been able to curl up in it, he filled it now.

Seeing the confused fellow's attention caught by that, India came and went, bringing shaving tools, brushes, towels as unobtrusively as a wise servant.

From the chair where a boy had curled Flagg's eyes went to the bed where a boy had slept. Then to the little round stepout rug beside it. The chest beneath a window. The pictures. The suddenly remembered clean smell of this room, like no other. The remembered light, the level refraction come in from a whole hillside of summer greenwoods, cleared and cooled.

How long was it since he had forgotten the simplicity, the serenity, the security of this chamber, in which, from one generation to another, the elder sons of the India family had grown to men?

His father had come in again. This time he had a laden tray, which he put down on the maplewood stand inside the door.

"Not at that bath yet, son? Loafer! . . . By the way, I don't know what your taste is; I've brought a bottle of cognac—it's the Napoleon, and quite good. And one of port." He was busy with a ring, squeezing a key off. "And here's this that I'll leave you, if neither of these just hits it. You know where the cellar is."

It was the clink of the key on the silver that brought Flagg up standing.

"Father, what are you doing? Mocking me? Or are you crazy, or what?"

"I don't understand, Flagg. Didn't you say a little while ago that you would like a drink? It's been our habit in this house, when a gentleman—"

"Gentleman! Good God, *I'm* not a *gentleman!* Haven't you sense enough, haven't you eyes enough, to know you can't bring that booze—can't leave that key with *me?*"

India stood shaking his head, like a man helpless among foreign tongues.

"To begin with, neither of these is 'booze'. Each has a name, as old, perhaps older than your own. Each has an identity, a character to keep that's worth more than money. Each has its pride. . . . In the second place, you used the word 'can't'. Here, Flagg, there's no question of 'can't' or of 'mayn't'. Get that through your head, son. Whatever the present law of the land may be, those two bottles are within it. There's no need of hurrying, of gulping at them on the sly, of keeping an eye out for a policeman. Nothing of that."

India thought he would sit down, then that he wouldn't.

"I've a warning for you, though. If your fancy happens to be for the kind of 'kick' you get out of 'hooch' you'll be disappointed in these. There's not a drop of that kid bravado, that swaggering rebellion, that 'to-hell-with-the-government' sort of thing in either bottle. And not a drop of graft. There's nothing exciting about them. They're simply well-made, honestly aged human drinkables, to be taken or not taken, as one would—"

"But, father, you don't *see*. What are all those fine words to a fellow when the drink has got him. When he's got it fastened on him—the *taste?*"

"Do you like the taste?"

"Not 'taste' that way. I hate it."

"Then you don't mean 'taste'."

"I mean—you know what I mean. When you know if you can only get a drink you'll feel better—anyway not so bad—and can forget for a while—"

"Forget, eh? So you've followed with the sheep, Flagg. Learned to call that 'the taste'. Passing the buck. Taking the trouble out of your own entrails and putting it over on that tray there. Giving it the shape of a devil; bowing down before it in religious terror; hollering, 'It's all your fault; you've ruined me!' As if they knew or cared, those bottles. As if they were alive, malign and purposeful, and it mattered a damn to them whether you touched them or not. . . . Flagg, Flagg, there's been too much good stuff gone into your making for you to be talking the patter of the congregation of the worshippers of the Great God Alibi. Alibi! I tell you, son, I have never yet seen a case where over-drinking was the cause of a man's failure; I've seen plenty where it was its confession. People hate to acknowledge that in their loved ones, so they hurry to catch at the easy alibi. 'If it weren't for the liquor!' Son, listen. Putting aside a few with taints or twists, who ought to be in sanitariums and out from under well folks' feet, I've never yet seen a man 'take to drinking' when he had anything else on earth he really wanted very much to do."

Flagg spread fierce arms.

"What about me, then? What's the use of my fighting? What on earth is there that I can do—when the best of my life's behind me, wasted?"

He meant it. India hadn't to pretend; he couldn't help it; he laughed aloud.

"*Kid!* Why, your life hasn't begun yet, didn't you know that? Yes, but you'll snort too, Flagg, when you look back at that, thirty or forty years from now. All that's behind you is your school days. You're about ready to go to work now."

"School days! I hadn't any. I don't know a single thing."

"You know things your father doesn't. Mark me, Flagg, if I'd been the man I ought to have been, I'd never have let you go to the school you've gone to. But now that you've gone, and come home again, I can say it—you're better educated in a lot of ways than I've ever been. I only wish I had you in the publishing business with what you have to bring."

"Me?"

"I can find fellows who have their Greek and philosophy, plenty of them, and with the same brains and background as yours. But to find one who knows the feel in the hand of iron batter-

ing on iron usefully, who knows real cold, real hunger, the language of men in pits, the ways of girls on streets—"

"Me?"

"I don't know how you feel about a printer's life, Flagg. If you like adventure, I can only tell you this, there's no other adventuring quite like it—adventuring with the dreams of ten thousand men." India opened his hands, palms up, the simplest of gestures. "There it is. Whether you want it or not, you alone can say. It's been in the India line for three generations. I'm beginning to grow old."

"But, father, you can't mean all this about—not about *me*."

"Think it over a while, Flagg . . . And, Flagg, see your mother. When you're ready to, that is. . . . If you want to come down to dinner presently, do; if you don't, don't. There'll always be something to pick up in the ice-box. . . . Shall I close your door?"

Flagg stopped him. "If you're going, father, take that with you. That stuff on the tray."

"Why?"

"I don't want it. I don't need it."

"I see, but—as a matter of fact I wasn't going downstairs just now. Will it be in your way there? You won't be using that stand."

Flagg reddened. India closed the door and went away.

For half an hour Flagg busied himself with the energy of the exalted. In his bath he splashed the water. His face lathered for the razor, he paused to stare his funny-looking self in the eyes.

"Me! Me, he meant."

It had grown dusk in the room when he finished his dressing. Ready to go, he still stood, caught in musing, among the old possessions that grew the more familiar as they grew the more shadowy. Not yet could he get away from that incredulous "Me!"

His attention, roving, came to the bottles on the tray on the maplewood stand. He sat down on the bed and studied them across the gloom, still flushed with resurrection. He had to deride them: "Don't talk to *me*."

Straight away, having by his own word endowed them with lives, identities, and tongues, they made haste to speak.

The cognac fleered. "Feel like a million dollars, eh? Headache all gone?"

The port joined in. "No more leather-mouth? No more hollow-at-the-pit?"

"You're wasting your time," Flagg hit back. "You may as well realize that, once and for all."

But he *was* hitting *back*. That he felt he had to, made him uneasy, and this made him furious.

The bottles knew it. Growing tall as the dark wrapped around it, the cognac gave him neither time nor quarter. "You're no fool. You know that just a few drops would set that headache right, and no harm done. Your father himself said—"

How on earth had the weird creature known there was still a pain in Flagg's cranium, when Flagg himself had forgotten it? Still an esurient emptiness all through him, with which no bath or shave could do away.

He began to bluster. "You're wasting your time, looking at *me*."

How long had he sat there? It had grown black night.

"Who brought us up here? Your father. What did he say? 'Help yourself'."

Now that they were invisible, the devil's angels filled all that corner of the room. He had to get to his feet at last, go, snap on the light, and face them.

"Damn your souls, I'll show you! Once and for all!"

Grabbing them by the necks he carried them to a window, opened the screen, and leaned out. Now he had them where he wanted them. He had them by their necks, and there was hard gravel down below.

But then, on the gravel, he saw a figure standing, idling, looking up at this win-

dow in which he made so furious a silhouette. It was his father.

His father said nothing. But he seemed to say, "So they've succeeded in getting you to fight them, have they, son?"

Flagg withdrew, his face hot. He sank down on the bed again, holding one bottle on either knee, a fist around its windpipe. He sat and he sat.

What was he to do with them? The more he strangled them, the more they sniggered. Frowning, perspiring, he sat and he sat and he sat.

And then he saw himself in the glass of the bureau across the room.

He began to laugh. If he didn't look too silly for anything! Humped there, knobbed with muscles, sweating cold, wrestling for life with a couple of—what?

He looked down at the things in his purpling fists. What? Two bottles made of glass made of sand. Filled with the juices of hillside grapes, gathered by peasants, treated by unextraordinary working-men in immemorial, unmysterious ways.

He went and put them on their tray.

He mopped his face.

"Good Lord!"

His mirth got down into his chest.

"You poor idiot!"

His laughter was like a clearing wind.

He went to his mother's room. When he found she was awake he leaned on the edge of her bed for a while and held her hand.

There wasn't a great deal to say in words. He did say, "I'm all right, mother, so that's all right. I'm as glad as a hound pup to be home again. Father's going to give me a job. What do you think of that?"

"I think that's a happy thing. You don't know, Flagg, how glad I am to see you so big and well. Since your brother died I've been thinking how sorry a mess—"

"I know. But it was all my fault. I'm sorry I ran away."

There was silence for another while. But by and by Flagg put a sudden hand to his head.

"Where's Fern?"

Anne didn't know. He went out into the hall. His father was just coming up the stairs.

"Where's Fern?"

"She went out a little while ago."

"Do you mean—she went away?"

"I don't know, son."

Flagg ran along the hall to the upper porch. It was a quiet night, a little warm, full of the fragrance of ripe summer. The moon, yet to rise, began to pale the stars above the ridge.

There was no use in scanning the valley. He went to the southern railing, above the garden. When he saw something gray moving among the green things a queer thought from somewhere flicked across his mind.

"Where's the ladder? The painters' ladder. It should be here."

What a difference! Scissoring his legs over the railing, he let himself down all his grown length. For a moment he hung by his hands from the edge of the porch floor. Then he dropped. It was not a long way, but it ruined a hydrangea plant.

Fern's thoughts were in a tangle; the confusion of her emotions had ended by driving her out of the house.

From the moment she had entered it, but especially from the moment she had knelt beside the bed of that whitening old woman who had been a mother to her once upon a time, she had not known what to do with herself or where to hide herself away.

The queerest nostalgia oppressed her, not a sickness to be at home—for she was there—but a sickness to be someone she was not.

It is not often that two people look at each other with open eyes, but that is what the two had done, the one on her bed up there, the other down beside it. And whatever Fern had read and seemed in a flash to understand, Anne India had seen Fern clearly as she was. It had

shown in the hurt and pity in the shadows in the bottoms of the older woman's eyes; it had cried aloud in her "I'm sorry," and Fern had heard.

Thereafter, all through the house, it was not so much the sight and scent of recollected things that punished Fern's heart as it was the ghost that followed her everywhere she went, a little girl-wraith, more eyes than anything, wondering as she slipped from shadow to shadow in shy surveillance who this grown stranger could be who walked through the rooms and passages and up and down the stairs unattended and knew her way.

The utter innocence of that child-wraith, with its abashed, questioning half-smile and its half-troubled, uncomprehending eyes.

Nothing else could have hurt so. Not to be recognized by an old friend is bitter enough, but not to be known or even guessed at by the child one was is the bitterest.

It was this that had driven Fern from the house at last, as if in the open she could find cover to hide her. An act of folly. She might have known that, however haunted the house, the garden, going from dusk to dark and peopled at every turning with the shapes of memory, would be a ground precisely fit for the shadowing of that phantom chatelaine.

From the bird-bath to the brick steps, from the brick steps to the button-chrysanthemum corner, from there to the rhododendron brakes, from the rhododendrons to the oval grass plot again and the bird-bath in its center, outflanked wherever she tried to turn, taken in ambush at every start by those perplexed little-girl-eyes, driven back and driven back, pitilessly.

The bird-bath stood on its pedestal three feet high. Fern crossed her arms on the stone bowl and hid her face in the hollow they made. The child of her fantasy, emboldened, came stealing to stand not far away.

"Are you crying, lady?"

"No, no."

Fern opened her eyes. The cave of her arms had water at the bottom, the water in the bird-bath. A drop from her cheek fell into it and set rings going, touched faintly by a treble shine, the remnant of dusk in the top of the west, the beginning of starlight, the pallor forerunning the moon.

In a light mixed as cunningly as that, nothing is weird.

"Who are you, lady?"

"I'm Fern."

"That's queer. Because *I'm* Fern."

"But I'm you."

Incredulity.

"But I *am*. You've *got* to believe it."

"Why are you so funny then? Why aren't you happy? Why don't you play?"

"I'm not funny. I am happy. And I'll play."

"Do."

"But what? How? . . . Flagg, how do you play?"

Flagg, who had somehow been standing there for minutes, saying nothing, thought it over. He spoke in scorn.

"That's a good one. You, asking me. If ever there was anybody knew how to play, that one was you. Remember the ladder?"

"Yes, but there's no ladder. No ladder any more."

"Oh, haven't you seen—don't tell me you haven't seen the *ladder*."

"Poor Rex. I remember."

"It is a *little* bit cooler out here, Fern." Flagg laughed a funny laugh. "Got your moccasins?"

"Poor Rexie Tot."

"Poor nothing! Look at him. Try to beat him in a foot race to the deer. Come on, lazy."

There were diamonds on the grasses and diamonds on the flower stems. Half of the moon, up over the ridge, turned the tree tops yellow for an instant before turning them silver.

Rex was racing so lightly, there ahead, that not a diamond was shivered, but so swiftly that he beat Fern and

Flagg all hollow. Reaching the couchant stag he threw a leg over, equestrian, and they saw that beast arise, docile and tall in the argent light, arch its neck, wheel soundlessly and, bearing the boy through striped light and shadow, trot away.

Light and shadow. Light in taut ribbons; shadow roughhewn in big blue-black polyhedrons. Olympian groves. Elysian glades.

The night was neither hot nor cool. The stag's pace was neither fast nor slow. Or was it both? Distances were nothing to that gait, sweeping, elastic, full of verve, but stately. Mountains were but hillocks, shining rivers but longer leaps. Yet Fern and Flagg, running on either side, were never troubled.

Wizards had their minds, witches their wills. Now they neither marked nor cared where fantasy led. Their eyes were not for their feet or even for themselves at all, but only for that wild princeling riding across the sky.

No one would ever have believed it. Rex! Rex come into his own at last, bending the mettlesome stag to his will with strong hands on its antlers. Rex with the wind of flight in his hair, his eyes shining, his face transfigured. Rex with really imperial legs.

"See!" they kept calling to each other, as their road ran on around the world. "Only look at the big fellow, will you!"

Around and around the valley of the world. And up the mountain toward the moon.

"Nobody else could ride so. Faster, Rex!"

"Spur on, Rex. No, *up!* Up the mountain! That's the fellow! Prance!"

What had the pale night done with its pallor? Blacker and blacker, striped with rarer and rarer beams. Wood interior. Steeper and steeper ground.

"Rex, what's wrong?"

"Look out, Rex! What *are* you doing?"

"Where *are* you going, Rex?"

Where nothing could be queer, here was a queer thing.

A refusal of the slope. A soundless snort. A shying. An abrupt, dim wheeling back. Not a word, not a warning. Gone.

"R-e-x!"

"R—e—x!"

But back down that hill the stag went, stubbornly, antlers high. Smaller and smaller in each moonshaft, Rex went riding away from them, his shoulders humped, head sunk a little, eyes on another road than theirs.

"Why?" Fern wondered, though she knew. Now he was no bigger than a silver bullet. No bigger than a silver needle down the striped corridor. "Why did he leave us?" she wondered when he was altogether gone.

Flagg waved a hand. "Good-by, old man!" He had a husk in his throat, because it was he that had done it all, ruthlessly.

"Good-by, good luck!" Fern had one in her throat too, because it was she that had helped.

Turning, two of them, not three now, their ears abruptly open to the brawling of water, they walked on into the hollow where White Brook ran black beneath the trees. They sat down on the turf of the bank above the pool. They looked around.

"I'm glad I've come here," Fern said, after a long while. "I hadn't realized it was all so small."

"This 'swimming pool' of ours—"

"How could we ever have—"

"Fern, we actually *dived*. Remember? But then, we were awful little ourselves, I guess."

"I hadn't realized. That we were so little."

A silence.

Flagg broke out, "Wasn't it fun!"

"I'd nearly forgotten. I could stay under longer than you could, Flagg; remember? And *I* could keep my eyes open. I used to drive you wild, catching your ankles."

"Don't worry, you got what was coming to you. Some good spanks on the spanking-place."

Fern sat as still as stone. She stared without winking at the moon-flecked black surface of the pool. That tiny, tiny pool. Those tiny, tiny kids. . . . It was nothing she had expected, nothing she tried for; she hardly knew what to do with it when it suddenly possessed her—a pure beatitude of mirth.

"You were mean, Flagg. Those spanks hurt. And *didn't* they turn *red!*"

"In the spring, yes. By August, though, you were always too heathen brown to show. You were a grand calendar, that way."

Flagg shook. Fern asked him why.

"I was wondering whether you and I would still be running around the landscape stark Adam naked till this minute, if it hadn't been for Rex's—" His tone sobered, but he went on. "You remember that day. The one when Rex went woozy on us, and poor mother had her stroke of nerves. Weren't you scared? Lord! but I was. I didn't know, then, it was mother that was the *petrified* one."

"Why was she petrified? Wasn't it—"

"Why, you know how she was about Rex. And when she saw him throwing that fit."

"It wasn't us?"

Flagg gaped at her. "You crazy nut!"

A minute went by, and another and another.

"Flagg."

"Yes?"

"Take my hand."

Flagg took it. Before he knew enough even to be astonished, there were the two locked hands down on his knee, and Fern's head on top of them.

Startled as he was, he had to grin.

"*Now* who's the one—?" He had sense enough to shut his mouth then. But she had caught his intention.

"Don't, Flagg." He felt her lips against his knuckles. "Oh, Flagg, dear, be good to me."

He pulled his hand up, and hers with it, and her head.

"And you," he cried, "be good to *me!*"

He held her face tight between his palms. Both of them pale, their eyes big, they stared. It wanted some staring—two lifetimes turning themselves right-side-out.

"Fern."

"Flagg."

He kissed her on the lips.

Dead girl. For a moment she was like that, unmoving, still staring. Then her breath came out.

"Ohhhh!"

Warmth poured over her face.

Still it was no more than a breath: "Ohhhh! Y-e-s!"

She came forward in one swaying motion and lay heavy against him, her head against his shoulder, her closed eyes against his neck. An arm went over his other shoulder, awkwardly. Clumsy fingers got hold of the stuff of his coat and no longer fumbled, their hold established, like a death-grip.

"Oh, my—my lover—yes, yes."

As they walked down hill after a while Flagg felt her shoulders shiver a little under his encircling arm.

"You're chilled. You shouldn't have sat on the ground like that. Idiots, both of us."

The shivering stopped.

"I'm not cold at all."

The hardwood thinned along the path. Just above the house, where the slide always used to be in the winter, it gave place to pines, black even in bright moonlight.

"What *is* it, Fern?" Flagg brought her to a halt. "Is my arm too—"

His life had aimed too many blows at him. He had learned too well to dodge at a shadow and come back with his fists up.

"Would you rather," he demanded, his voice roughening as his heart got ready to sink, "rather I'd take my arm away? Is it—that?"

He could see that her face was twisting. His own flamed.

But then, "No!" she cried. "Not away! Tighter!"

"Flagg," she said, "when I—whenever I—Flagg, you've got to know enough never to let me go. You've got to be stubborn, got to be pitiless with me. And patient, my dear one. For a while."

She turned her face swiftly to him.

"You've kissed me. Don't let me forget how it— Kiss me again."

When Sam India, afoot on the upper porch, saw them coming down by the brick steps and the flower garden, he stopped still by the railing and studied the dim figures for a moment before he breathed again. And that breath was the breath of life.

He was filled with a sudden happiness, not the less whole in that it was bound in one with melancholy. You watch the soldiers marching who have come back from the war. No odds what the war has done to them, these have been left alive. Alive, at least.

In the obscurity of the night light, drawing toward the house, those two looked fair. But India knew. They were survivors, but after all they *were* survivors, bringing back less than they had had to start with, and marked.

Still—happiness. If they were starting out again, a little late and a little lame, still, they *were* starting out. They were on the road again. They were going somewhere, after all.

India stepped back into the shadow. He didn't want them to see him.

"Little thanks to me," he mused.

He was out of it. He saw his life as a series of brave advances, shortlived, and long, shambling retreats.

He went softly and listened outside of Anne's window.

"Not asleep yet?"

"Where are they, Sam?"

"They're coming in."

The End

The Lion's Mouth

WHY EAT?

BY ALEXANDER BLACK

I BEGAN eating, quite conventionally, in my early childhood. My understanding is that I ate as soon as I could. In due course three meals a day came to seem like nothing better than a good start. Between meals there was always a happy chance of more. Special longings developed. For example, when I was a New York messenger boy (on Maiden Lane) I discovered that oysters could be had at a stand-up place for a cent apiece. You could dip each oyster, still alive (although I did not suspect *that*) into a common bowl filled with a mixture of pepper, salt, and street dust, while the man, brandishing a murderous knife, waited for the gesture that would indicate readiness for another. When I was a cub reporter I preferred assignments that guaranteed, or even seemed to imply, free eats. The complex was right there, alert and terrible.

Suspicion of the evil of eating came upon me gradually. I had, of course, sharp moments in which I learned a little about cause and effect. Thoreau noticed that when a man has an annoyance in his stomach he thinks the whole world has been eating green apples. That feeling for all humanity is the real beginning of a pain in the conscience. Thus I began to listen to the reformers.

A thousand writers and talkers told me that we are what we eat. Naturally this gave me an uneasiness when I glanced into a mirror. It was possible, under the spell of this warning, and in the presence, let us say, of baby lamb, to feel quite obscene. There was, indeed, a time when the vegetarians made a profound impression upon me. The horror of meat was emphasized by the alleged spirituality of the Hindus and the entertaining irreverence of Bernard Shaw. I wanted at least a little spirituality, and it seemed worth while to become vegetably superior if the thing might be done. Ultimately I could not admire the people of India. It was true that they were able to sit for many hours in contemplation, but even an ecstatic laziness does not look very good to us here. Men who eat beef have had a heavy job trying to get the contemplators to wake up and clean house. As for Bernard Shaw, it seems likely that he would have been impudent on any diet. Nevertheless, I was awed into being cautious about meat, and arranged a defensive philosophy to rebuff vulgar criticism. One could point out that the carnivorous animals did not attain the highest ferocity. When we wanted to picture the most virile pugnacity did we not indicate the grain-eating bull? Did not the bull exemplify the utmost maleness and a fighting initiative beyond parallel? Had not Horace Fletcher induced a Yale crew to train and win on *milk?*

Oh, yes! There was milk: the perfect food. Why not be perfect? Milk seemed innocent, and it made shopping so simple. But a special group of objectors intercepted and withered me. Was I a baby, or a calf? Was I eager to die biliously? What right had I to assault the cow in order to keep my body alive?

When I turned wistfully to eggs it was with the feeling that, at all events, I was not assaulting the hen. The hen really appeared to discard the egg. One might readily infer that she was through with it. Why shouldn't I take up the egg where the hen left off? I didn't realize the blunder until the specialist got me. "Eggs!" he gasped. "My dear man, *you are not a longshoreman!*" It turned out that I was of an intellectual type and couldn't stand the violent nourishment of an egg. Moreover, I hadn't learned of the scientific quarrel among specialists as to the relative values of the white and the yolk. I know now that when you break the shell you have before you good and evil. But which is which? As between one theology of eggs and another, which am I to follow? And there is the awful matter of cooking. Our distinguished laboratory man insisted that no egg has any use as food unless it has been cooked for ten minutes or over—this in a hard-boiled world! No. Eggs are too complicated. Somewhere there is something in them, but there isn't time to learn the facts.

Vegetables? Fruits? Try to determine which will save you and which is fatal, which must be raw and which must know the fire. Venture boldly into discussions on whole or refined grain, brown or white sugar. You may stagger forth from the uproar about carbohydrates in a mood to exclaim, "Thank heaven there is water!"

But wait a moment. I believed that when all else was lost, when the last vestiges of traditional nourishment had been removed by one food expert after another, when the banquet board had been bared of every danger, I could grasp a goblet of water and drink triumphantly to utter emancipation. Then I met one of the newest authorities on diet. He had just written (and printed) a gay and definitive book. And I mentioned water.

"Water!" He was aghast. "*Leave it alone!*" he urged, passionately, as one might sob about bootleg liquor. It was then April. He said he had not tasted water since January. Yes, foods had their element of water, and one had boiled water in tea or coffee, but *water!*—leave it alone. Don't take the terrible risk.

Perhaps it can be done. Perhaps eating *is* a mere habit fortified by a corrupting tradition. Perhaps neither bread nor water is essential. Fasters offer wonderful pictures of a subliminal joy transcending anything known to those who are fuddled with food. No more toxemia. No more regrets. No more specialists. *No more bills.*

But before I begin the glorious repudiation I'm going out to find a large, juicy, medium-well-done steak.

THE PROPHET REPROVED

BY CHARLES A. BENNETT

IN THE old days prophesying was managed in a sensible way. That is to say, it was not managed at all. You quietly awaited the divine afflatus or you went about your business until you felt the fit coming on. Then you uttered your ravings or forebodings or denunciations until inspiration was exhausted. Of course there were devices for inducing the prophetic experience: one might try violent dancing, or starvation; one might seek the solitude of desert or mountain, or breathe the mephitic exhalations of some horrid cavern. But one could never be sure that these methods would produce the desired result. It was always something of a gamble. And so prophets were rare, and prophesying was sporadic and, when it occurred, refreshingly exciting for all concerned.

But those days are gone. Our age has spoiled most simple and spontaneous

things by organizing and professionalizing them. The undertaker has become a mortician, the house-agent a realtor, the publicity man a public relations counsel, and the garbage man a refusarian. Prophecy has not escaped. It has become a career. Men "go in for it." Hundreds of them. Their books of vaticination burst almost daily from the press. Their technic has been standardized. Just as there are, shall we say, ten and only ten ways of preparing a corpse for burial, or seven and only seven ways of buying a bijou residence, so there are three approved methods of prophesying.

The first consists on setting down what you wish to have happen and then predicting that this inevitably will happen. For example, if you are a pacifist, a socialist, a Christian, a Democrat, you will prophesy the eventual triumph of Christianity or Socialism or whatever it may be. "My dear man, it's bound to come; it's only a matter of time." The second makes use of that conveniently pliable modern concept, Evolution. All you have to do is to discover the direction in which evolution is moving—a simple thing, some believe—and then bet on that. Thus evolution shows that throughout the course of history small groups have a way of merging and becoming consolidated into one large group. "From Competition to Co-operation"—that is the blessed formula. So we may confidently assert that the day of antagonistic nation-states is over and the era of the World State, of "a planetary consciousness," and of perpetual peace is at hand. Contrariwise, evolution everywhere operates through competition and natural selection. This shows that the dreams of pacifists are indeed but dreams. We may confidently assert that the state of war will be perpetual.

The third method is to take any process that can be dignified with the name of a tendency and to project it into the future. Thus you have only to look around you and you will see that civilization is playing Old Harry with human teeth and human eyes. Therefore we may confidently assert that in a few centuries our civilized descendants will be toothless and sightless.

I can write thus intimately of the prophetical method because I happen to know a man who since the War has adopted the profession of prophet. It was in the years immediately following the Armistice that he really blossomed out. All our leading Publicists were then having a grand time predicting the Downfall of Civilization. Civilization was on its death bed: on this they all agreed, although their diagnoses of the malady differed. Some said Bolshevism, others Secret Diplomacy, others Chemical Warfare, others the Ignorance of the Masses. Nationalism, Industrialism, Over-population, Worship of the Machine, Selfishness or lack of the Get-together Spirit were also mentioned. The leading publicists tired of this after two years or so. Perhaps they grew impatient because the débâcle was so slow in arriving. But my man—let us call him Burlap—kept it up. As I say, he has made a profession of it. He began in 1919 with a work in the style then popular, *The Nemesis of the West.* This was followed by a book in which he predicted the downfall of the White Protestant Nordics. Then came *The Jaundice of Civilization, or The Yellow Peril Again.* In the last year or so he has fallen a victim to speculative chemistry and biology and he has published a nasty work describing the coming Scientific Age in which men will have completely lost the power of motion, synthetic babies at government stores will be all the rage, no one will need to sleep more than five minutes a day, and a meal is to consist of one pellet.

I was talking to him the other day and telling him how repellent his scientific Utopia was to me, with everything in it as hard and bright and efficient and tidy and antiseptic as a hospital. No place for a human being, I said.

"Condemned out of your own mouth,"

was his retort. "The future will have no place for people like you, people who seem to have a natural love for dirt and disorder and muddle. You will all be weeded out in the course of evolution. Only those who are worthy of the gifts of science will survive to enjoy them."

"Score for you, all right," I replied, "*provided* I and my friendly fellow-muddlers are going to be weeded out. But that's what I can't see. How can you be so blamed certain about what's going to happen? Most of us find it hard to pick a winner at the races even though we may have studied form for years. But backing a horse to show is a cinch compared to backing Utopia to win."

His answer was long and tedious and made much of first principles. This was when I learned the three methods of prophesying which I have mentioned. I was so bored by his lecture that I decided to reprove him.

"Burlap," I began, "what you say is impressive, but it's too full of vagueness and generality and unverifiable long-range prediction. You're like a man taking pot shots with a gun that can carry sixty miles. It's a glorious trajectory, but you can't tell whether you ever hit the mark or not. Just to convince a skeptic like myself, won't you let off a few short-range prophecies. For example, tell me what I'm going to have for breakfast tomorrow."

Well, of course he bridled at that. Yes, bridled, I think, is what he did. Finally I persuaded him to let *me* make a prophecy. This was easy, for Burlap has a peculiar stealthy way of entering a room. He grips the outside handle firmly, turns it slowly, and then opens the door by inches. Like a Prohibition Agent. All his friends have noticed it. I told him about this. Then I said:

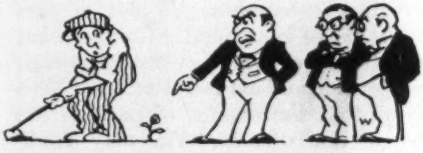
"Now, Burlap, just go out of the room and then come in again, and we'll see if I'm not right."

You hardly need to be told what happened. He burst into the room like the youngest member of the family just home from school.

"What about your prophecy now?" he exclaimed triumphantly.

"Or yours, or anyone's?" I replied. "My dear deluded Burlap, don't you see that you've just exploded the pretensions of all prophets? My predicting the way you would enter the room gave you the opportunity to falsify the forecast. That is the only useful function you prophets serve. By telling us the direction in which we are unconsciously moving you give us the chance to change that direction if we do not like the prospect. If you tell me that my great-great-grandchildren are going to be hairless and toothless I shall at once start a campaign for the copious use of bay rum or whatever it is, and another campaign to Save the Nation's Teeth, with the slogan "Gnaw a Bone a Day" or, perhaps, "A Bone a Day Keeps the Dentist Away." If you tell us that Armageddon will surely come in 1943 we shall thank you for the warning and take steps to postpone that catastrophe indefinitely. Don't you see there are just two courses open to the prophet: one is to publish his prophecies so that people can prevent their coming true, the other is not to publish them, but to keep them a dead secret. In either event it seems to me there's not much in prophesying as a career."

Of course I made no real impression on him. He accused me of incorrigible flippancy over issues that deserved serious treatment, and went home in disgust. But at the time I thought I had settled his hash. I think so still.



ADVICE TO EMPLOYERS

BY FRANCIS HACKETT

THERE was a time when the joy of life seemed to me the first of all considerations. I was content if anyone laughed or even gave another

person a smile. One of the prettiest idyls I ever saw, as I then thought, was on gloomy Ninth Avenue in winter, where a young undertaker's assistant caught sight of a rosy-cheeked girl and, stopping long enough to lay down the cerements that he had just gathered from the hearse, rolled up a light snowball and threw it at the girl, who was enchanted.

At that time I was an employee. Now I am an employer of labor. Viewing this episode with the eye of an employer of labor, I no longer go into irrelevant and extraneous considerations. I ask the simple question: Was the young man hired to throw snowballs, or was he not?

My army of employees is not a big one. To be truthful, it consists of two persons, a male and a female. But if you can infer an elephant from its wishbone, you can infer the labor problem from a single worker. Being an employer of labor has opened my eyes.

When I was an employee, and did my best, I always hoped that my employer would give me a kind word. This shows how little I understood the difficulties of the employing class. Now I scowl at the sky, and ask in a surly tone, "Why haven't we more beets? Why is the rhubarb growing so rankly? What's the matter with these strawberries? They look pretty rotten to me." My employee doesn't quail. But he realizes I am a stern, just man. I am solid, tangible, disagreeable, and his home depends on me. He pays attention to me. I like it. I kick a stone out of my path and walk away as if I owned the earth.

If you pamper human beings, by making life easy for them, you soften their fiber. The employing class has an interest in hard fiber, and it is folly to surround the employees with a false sense of security. An occasional hint that after all you may go to live in New Mexico or Algiers is advisable. So long as your employees cannot quit you easily, quake beneath them.

Be suspicious. Always lift things and look under them. Ask in a sharp tone, "Who broke that?"

It is not hard to be suspicious. In these later days, as half my army of employees files by, I catch words like these flowing through my brain, "There is Caliban, who has no idea of the value of time! What does he do for his wages? He sneezes, he whistles, he spits on his hands, he stops to lean on his hoe. And has he a good conscience? When I come suddenly into the garden I observe a sweeping and furtive motion from his mouth to his hip-pocket. He has whipped away his pipe. His own heart tells him that he is puffing away his energy in smoking a pipe. And how is it that he takes so long when he walks from one end of the lawn to the other? Is he a turtle that he should look around so often? What I'd like to see is an employee with the spirit of service, who walks briskly, works briskly, answers like a soldier, and like a soldier takes the pay he is given. But this is a badly oiled robot. He pretends not to see me when I try to catch his eye. He leaves his work unfinished at the stroke of the clock. He has to be prodded. How can there be any hope for humanity unless humanity pulls its weight?"

The best employers learn the business from the ground up. They walk the sleepers, they dig in the mines, they spread manure, in order to be masters when they are masters. I am only a beginner. I am working only toward my first million. If I were to advise the old hands it would be an impertinence, so I address myself solely to other beginners, and in these elementary words: Don't be soft. Be a little unapproachable. Never laugh. Say glumly, "That's all right. You do what I tell you." Or ask, "Did you carry out my instructions?" Fear, not love, is the employer's friend.

Give just a tiny bit above the market wages, so that you can be sure of your grip on your dependent.

Wages, I find, is the word that is engraved on the true employer's heart. When Charlie Schwab and myself lay our heads on our respective pillows of a

night, we can reasonably ask ourselves, "What would happen if the wages were not forthcoming next Saturday night?"

Forthcoming they must be. The week, which used to trundle around as easy as a hoop, now quickly turns up Saturday like a leaded toy. Whether you fetch home the pay envelopes in an armored car or just fish them out of your pocket, the appalling fact is that pay day recurs. This is the kernel of being an employer of labor. He must turn up trumps every Saturday night, unless he is able to go away for a long week-end till Tuesday morning.

I once worked for an establishment that never paid us till Tuesday afternoon, and then never till five minutes to three, by check. Joe always had the checks ready on Tuesday morning, up to the previous Saturday; but by some strange accident Mr. T. never countersigned them till after lunch, and never in time to be cashed before three. It was extraordinary how often this accident happened, and how unhappy it made us that this world was so hinged that the accident occurred seven minutes from our bank. Every half-hour, from one o'clock onwards, I used to descend hungrily to the business office, to see if Mr. T. were back yet. Did I eat or didn't I eat? It depended on the supposed whim of Mr. T. How whimsical I thought he was, always to linger over lunch on his Tuesday afternoons. Now, as a fellow-employer, I begin to lift a corner of the veil. I begin to see how Mr. T. lingered over his roast-beef sandwich, wondering how he would secrete the necessary funds. We were his natural enemies, who were about to alienate his bank balance from him. He thought of us with morose humor as he sat there with his hat on the back of his head.

As an employer, I understand his frame of mind. My employee is not so much a person who does work for me as a person who gets paid by me. I pay him all he is entitled to, and rather more. I am his benefactor. Where would he be if I did not create employment for him? Where are the helpless unemployed? Because I exist, he exists. He was created for me, and after me. I am Atlas, who supports his world.

These are the things I never understood when I was an employee. I was so wrapped up in myself. My imperfections seemed to me light, human, explicable, and rather appealing. I did not look on them as lapses from Platonic perfection, or reflect that my employer had paid for a model one hundred per cent and was getting from me a bare seventy-two per cent. I thought of myself as cursed by tedium and cramped by routine, and I ached for free days and half-holidays. Did I realize that a free day for me was an unfree day for my employer, and holidays a mixture of relief from my personality and annoyance at the work undone?

Those who employ on a grand scale can forget these worries. They can invent machinery, time-clocks, piecework, etc., by which the "human element" is made a calculable factor, and by which the single person is regimented. But no matter how you dragoon human nature, it has a way of reappearing, like a dimple in a ball. Hence I stress the one-sided attitude of the employee, which keeps balking the employer's philanthropic impulses.

Often I make a concession, only to find it snatched up as a natural right. This is depressing. But when I remember that I have joined a new class and am simply in the early stages of class solidarity, my feelings are less ruffled. I glance up at the plump contours in the Club windows as I walk up Fifth Avenue, and I say, "I, who once resented you, now know your sufferings. I salute you, my brothers. Fine them for sneezing, they'll respect you the more for it. Remember the tendency of mankind to evil. Control your naturally tender hearts. In so far as your contours allow you, be hard."

Editor's Easy Chair

REORGANIZING THE WORLD

BY EDWARD S. MARTIN

STEADY readers of the Easy Chair, if there are some, may recall allusions made now and then to the Great Pyramid—the pyramid of Cheops—and its remarkable feature as a depository of astronomical and other ancient knowledge, and especially to the passage in it in which sundry and diligent researchers think they have discovered an important and trustworthy record of important past events of human history and of some events of surpassing importance that are still to come. This is an old story about the prophetic passage, but newly noised about. The British-Israel people, who think the Anglo Saxons and others are the descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel and heirs to promises as children of the covenant made with Abraham, have tied up this Pyramid prophecy to the rest of their propaganda and made it a part of their case.

To have an opinion on such a matter is difficult, because opinions are based on knowledge, and enough knowledge of this Pyramid prophecy to plant an opinion on involves an amount of reading and an acquaintance with measurements, mathematics, archæology, and other branches which is much too voluminous for ordinary people to attempt. Still the idea is interesting, and the more so when one hears that, thanks to a campaign of newspaper advertisement, it has come to be a fervid topic of conversation in England. The prophecy as figured out and interpreted includes the dates of the beginning and end of the Great War, a resting spell to follow, and another period of chaos beginning on the 29th of May, 1928, and lasting till the 16th of September, 1936. That period is described as the Great Tribulation and when that is over, so we are told, the world is really going to settle down to peace and prosperity and people are going to be wiser and better behaved and business doubtless is going to be satisfactory.

The English like to bet, and if they are really talking so much about this prophecy they will probably tackle it on its sporting side and put up money for or against it, and that is the easiest way of expressing oneself on such a subject. If interest continues to be lively enough, we shall doubtless have odds from Lloyd's and a rate of insurance against this impending period of calamity, and of course the newspapers will take notice, especially if there is so much talk, and as the 29th of May approaches we may even see a good many large-type headlines on the subject.

As to the good or bad of such a story, one can say that to expect calamity is to invite it, and when a great many minds look for the bottom to drop out of the existing order it helps to bring on the expected disaster; but on the other hand, forewarned is forearmed, and this threat of calamity may give new energy to the managers of the world as it is, in their efforts to seek peace and ensue it.

It seems to be true and undeniable

that that old Pyramid is a very curious and remarkable edifice and was built as a record of certain attainments in knowledge. There are plenty of orderly, informed, and responsible minds that will admit as much as that. As to its containing this prophecy and as to the possibility of figuring out dates with such accuracy, incredulity is to be expected. But the general suggestion of troubles ahead has plenty of other bases, and if this Pyramid story helps to a consideration of the impediments to world peace and the possibility of removing them, and to serious and energetic action in that direction, this strange yarn may be useful.

Since the Great War nothing in the line of a world rumpus is quite unbelievable. We have had one and have not forgotten its astonishing proceedings and developments, nor how unexpectedly destructive and ghastly it all was. We know the world has not yet settled down to quiet going. We know that Eastern Europe is a problem and that the farther it runs into Asia the more of a problem it is. Man can see solutions of all imagined difficulties if they are approached with open minds and a truly healing spirit, but they cannot yet see how such a spirit is to be produced of sufficient energy and penetration to bring the nations really into harmony. As it is, they are all as much interested as ever in armament and all destructive agencies. They spend money freely on war material but rather grudgingly on peace efforts.

Our country, for example, in its consideration of the foreign debts does not primarily concern itself with the question whether the effort to collect them makes for world peace or not. Its stand is not unreasonable, but whether it is wise or not is a different matter. The real question about world peace is whether it can be obtained by steady, gradual efforts, or whether it will take another great jolt to bring men's minds to want it earnestly enough to make it their first concern.

THE leading article in *The Round Table* (London), a remarkable discourse on "The Commonwealth," makes the interesting suggestion that the world has got to be run as one great corporation—the one, indeed, described by Christ as the Kingdom of God. It holds that Great Britain and the United States between them have developed the possibility of representative government for great empires. It quotes Aristotle as saying that popular government would do for no more than ten thousand people, which is the largest number that could hear a single speaker; but modern improvements have gone far, far beyond that, and what with printing presses and newspapers and radios and loud speakers it is no longer so necessary to hear a single orator as it was in Greece. This *Round Table* writer sees as the great contribution of the Children of Israel to the sum of knowledge by which men live, the idea of one God, untouchable, invisible; and as the great exploit of the Commons of England that they conceived the device of representative government and made it work. The commonwealth, he says, on a national scale was England's particular gift to the world, and when the seed of the system spreading to America met the problem of control of thirteen self-governing colonies, the Americans solved it "by inventing the device of federal government, a stupendous achievement." The world, it says, "owes to America, the knowledge of how to create for one territory, however vast, a commonwealth including a great diversity of peoples."

All that is interesting, and readers will find it much more so if they examine the article for themselves. What it really means is a sort of millennium, and it makes it seem not only practicable, but necessary. It is the contribution, so one hears, of the same mind that was the leading contriver of the settlement between Ireland and England which established the Irish Free State.

Of course there is a vast deal to be done

before all that can come true, but such stories as that about the Pyramid prophecy and such dates as the 29th of next May, entirely distrustful as one may be about them, may still avail to jolt minds that are aware of the need of safeguarding human affairs to hurry up with their plans, and a widespread scare, if that should come along opportunely, might help to win them the necessary popular support. If Great Britain and the United States are best furnished with the means of stabilizing civilization—if they are the greatest world powers in material strength and at the same time possess the best training and the fittest racial traditions to bring the laboring ship of human life to port—it behooves them to approach the job with a sense of responsibility proportionate to their means. Great Britain is practiced in the employment of dealing with all manner of peoples and supplying government to some of them in all parts of the world. In its foreign relations the United States is much less experienced, but within its own borders it deals intimately with representatives of all mankind, scattered and in groups, and is constrained to use its best means and its best efforts to teach them self-government, and how to live under institutions that they did not create, and with neighbors of a different derivation from themselves. Morley Roberts, an English traveler, discussing half humorously the possibility that Canada will in due time annex the United States, speaks of our modest country as "the strange discordant elements of black and white and yellow, of Hun and Hike and Dago and Dutch, that is called, with an over-large claim, America; a country bound together mainly if not wholly by Anglo Saxons, and not too many of them." He affects to think that Canada "if true to herself and her white people" may yet be a greater nation than our States. Well, the competition is open, and there ought to be no scrouging. The climate is favorable to us in some particulars, but the Canadians are mighty good people. All the same, when one talks about safeguarding civilization it is proper to notice that the United States keeps a school in which pupils of all sorts of origins get used to one another and, by habits, knowledge, and mental attitudes so acquired, may reasonably hope to be the more useful in any great reorganization of mankind that circumstances may compel.

HOW reasonable or otherwise is this millennial suggestion about organizing the world as a whole? It is not an absolutely novel idea. It was nearly a century ago that Tennyson's prophetic instinct made visible to him the airy navies dripping their ghastly dew.

> Till the war drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle flags were furl'd
> In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world.

It is not a new idea, but the tokens that it is a real idea, perhaps approaching fulfillment, seem much more vivid than they ever were before. Whatever is going to happen to this world is making in it now and, like everything else that is going on now, it is making fast, most of it being also, as the *Round Table* says, the work of men scarcely aware of what they are doing. When the millennium comes it will come because it had to come; because the conditions of life had become such that it could not be put off any longer. The only thing that now hinders approach to the millennial condition is the minds of men, and the greatest factor in bringing it on is, as the *Round Table* writer suggests, the one great mind that had understanding of life. That is what the world needs; understanding of life. If we had it clear enough and could succeed in distributing it sufficiently and widely, we could start our millennial experience forthwith. The power of man over material things seems ample already for any physical improvement in life, and has not stopped yet. The hitch in all of it is about spiritual things; about getting enough people to have enough sense

as to what ought to be and what not; and above all about letting their fellows live within reason their own lives. There are those who think that physical development has about run its course and that we are on the brink of a period of spiritual development that must follow. This suggestion of a time of disaster, a great tribulation, does not conflict with that idea, for adversity is often the great spiritual teacher. We have caught up with Tennyson in the matter of the airy navies and he may not be far ahead of us in his Parliament of man.

THE truth is that this present world is very unreal. It is only about twenty years old, and none but the very young are used to it. It is the only world the very young people ever knew, but for the elders it is a strange experimental condition which keeps them constantly busy reminding themselves where they are and making necessary adjustments. They say that is what we have to do when we depart this life; that starting in on another plane with different values and new rules, we are apt to be troubled more or less until we get adjusted. If our life on earth fitted us for what follows, adjustment comes sooner—sometimes almost immediately—but if not, there may be worrisome delay about it, that delay being, no doubt, what has long been known under the name of purgatory. But in that progressive sphere of activity though values, as said, change greatly and material possessions go for nothing, there are other possessions which keep their value. Merit still counts, not necessarily the merit that comes of advertisement and popular approval, but the real thing that constitutes true inwardness. This may be a comfort to some people in view of the possibility of change approaching in this world which will make it more like a preliminary outskirt of the next. In Heaven and in the territory previous to it one understands that folks have, not what they can grab, but what they can perceive and understand. If that was more the case in this world our concerns would go better. As it is, too many people have what they have grabbed and are very limited in what they can perceive or understand. Nations are that way as well as individuals. To grab what you could was the good old rule, and nationalism is considerably founded on it. If life is to be reorganized that has got to stop, and since the Great War it has really seemed to be passing. The current attitude about conquest of territory is distinctly that you must not do it. It is recognized that it won't do if there is to be peace in the world and good roads, mass production, universal go-to-college, short skirts, bobbed hair, and the movies are to continue.

When one thinks of world reorganization he thinks, of course, of the League of Nations which was the first practical step towards it. The League is not dead yet. It is useful and always has been, but Mr. H. N. Brailsford, who has been lecturing hereabouts, observes that if it is to be a nucleus for world government it must come to terms with the United States. That we all know. The League has always seemed willing to come to terms, but so far the United States has continued to be coy. Mr. Brailsford, however, thought he saw a process going on that might come to something. In the visit of Mr. Coolidge to the Pan-American Congress at Havana he saw signs of a Pan-American League and he thought there might be a third including Russia and China and that all three of them might work together as parts of the world organization, with Africa a dependency for a long time to come. He thought too that a new type of government was being evolved in Russia and he called it a creative change; but Russian liberty would never develop on Anglo-Saxon lines, the Slav not being adapted to Anglo-Saxon reasoning.

All right about Russia till we know better, all right about everything till we know better, but meanwhile the lid dances quite merrily on the kettle.

Personal and Otherwise

THE author of "The Fools' Parade," ***John W. Vandercook,*** is a young American who three years ago visited Dutch Guiana and became so interested in the bush negroes of the region that since then he has given most of his time to the study of native negro cultures. He wrote several HARPER articles on the bush negroes; these were included later in his book *Tom-Tom*. He made a visit to West Africa, of which one result was his article in our last issue on African "magic science." And now Harper & Brothers are about to publish *Black Majesty*, Mr. Vandercook's life of Henry Christophe, the extraordinary negro monarch of Haiti a century ago. (A chapter of *Black Majesty* describing Henry Christophe's death appeared some months ago in the Magazine.) As to "The Fools' Parade," Mr. Vandercook informs us that although the material in it is pieced together from accounts of more than one daring escape from the penal colony of French Guiana, it is based on fact throughout. For the benefit of those who wish to know more about this colony, Mr. Vandercook has given us the following data:

French Guiana, known locally by the name of its capital city, Cayenne, was established during the French Revolution as a prison where political enemies too dangerous to guillotine could be safely put away. Hence its name: "The dry guillotine." Prior to this time—in 1763—twelve thousand Alsatians of the poorer class had come out on a colonizing venture, a venture which ended abruptly with the death from plague and starvation of ten thousand of their number. In 1823 a few shiploads of condemned prostitutes were sent out to intermarry with the convicts "in the interests of colonization."

A series of five proclamations culminating in the law of May 30, 1854, established the colony as the *one* overseas French prison, and since that time its criminal population has varied from 25,000 to 7,000—approximately the present figure. The mortality is about 63 per cent.

An old law states that a Frenchman (or a French colonial) sentenced to the prison for a term of less than eight years must spend an equal period outside the walls but within the limits of the country, and all sentenced for more than eight years must remain in the territory for life.

An average of seven hundred prisoners escape annually. Most are taken or return voluntarily, many die—and a very few reach safety.

Cayenne has an area of over 30,000 square miles of rich forest; yet it has only twenty kilometers of roads and less than 10,000 acres under cultivation. Prisoners are established in the city of Cayenne, at St. Laurent, and on the three small coastal islands (Dreyfus spent five years on Devil's or Traitor's Island), as well as in lumber camps in the bush.

There is practically no industry or trade of any kind in the colony. Many prisoners freed from prison but forced to remain in exile commit fresh crimes so they may be at least fed by the authorities, for there is no work and no possible source of wealth there.

Cayenne is for all habitual criminals and long-termers; it corresponds to all our states' prisons rolled into one.

John T. Flynn, formerly managing editor of the New York *Globe*, is a keen observer of the American business scene who writes a daily syndicated article on business conditions for a large number of newspapers, and has contributed to HARPER'S the following articles: "Who Owns America?" (May, 1926), "Luck in Business" (May, 1927), and "Our Courts and Free Speech" (September, 1927).

When the late Paul Draper, the singer (brother of Dr. George Draper of the Presbyterian Hospital in New York, and of Ruth Draper, the monologuist), was living in London some fifteen years ago, he and his wife, ***Muriel Draper,*** used to entertain at their house a remarkable group of musicians, artists, and writers. Mrs. Draper is now

writing her lively recollections of those London days. Her sketch of Henry James will be followed by other papers, including an account of her hilarious acquaintance with Norman Douglas, and glimpses of some of the most brilliant musicians of our time as they disported themselves under the Draper roof.

In our February issue ***John R. Tunis,*** former sporting editor of the *New Yorker,* now tennis critic of the New York *Evening Post,* wrote on the damage done to the once amateur sport of lawn tennis by the growth of pseudo-amateurism among officials and players. This month Mr. Tunis draws on his varied experience as an observer not only of tennis but of other sports to call in question our national credo concerning sport in general.

The first story of the month is by ***Ruth Suckow,*** author of *Country People, The Odyssey of a Nice Girl,* and many a quiet and revealing story of the life of her native Iowa. Her first contribution to HARPER'S, "The Little Girl from Town" (April, 1927), was chosen for republication in the O. Henry collection of outstanding short fiction of the year.

Thomas Hardy's poem reached us less than a month before his death at the age of eighty-seven. It was one of the last poems —if not actually the last—written by him. We publish it in proud and grateful recollection of his long association with the House of Harper, and of his many previous contributions to the Magazine: contributions which included short stories, poems, and that memorable serial—at first called "Hearts Insurgent"—which ultimately became *Jude the Obscure.*

Sisley Huddleston, formerly chief correspondent of the London *Times* in Paris, now represents several other publications there. He is the author of a number of books on French and international politics, including a biography of M. Poincaré (whose achievement in stabilizing the franc he discussed in a HARPER article last April). Both Mr. Huddleston's experience as a close-range observer of European affairs and his reluctance to take a pessimistic view of the chances for peace add weight to his indictment of the present European system of alliances.

Sigmund Spaeth, music critic, lecturer, and author of *The Common Sense of Music, Barber Shop Ballads, Music in the Air,* etc., makes this month his first contribution to the Magazine.

Every representative list of American women of outstanding achievement contains the name of ***Katharine Bement Davis.*** Doctor Davis (she is a Ph.D. of the University of Chicago and an LL.D. of Mount Holyoke and Western Reserve) was for thirteen years superintendent of the New York State Reformatory for Women. She was appointed Commissioner of Correction of New York City by Mayor Mitchel, became chairman of the Parole Commission, and since 1918 has been general secretary of the Bureau of Social Hygiene. Her article sets forth the results of an unusual investigation made under the auspices of the Bureau.

Margaret Ayer Barnes (Mrs. Cecil Barnes) of Chicago made her first appearance in HARPER'S last September with "Home Fires," that well-remembered story about a woman who found it difficult to forgive her erring husband when he told her that the love for which he had left her was only a fleeting attraction. Mrs. Barnes has only recently taken up writing, but has had unusual success. In recent months she has been collaborating with Edward Sheldon on a play.

For several years ***Albert Jay Nock,*** a member of the *American Magazine* staff in the early years of this century and later the guiding spirit of *The Freeman,* has been living in Europe. His essays appear frequently in this Magazine; he is also the author of an excellent life of Thomas Jefferson.

One of the most vigorously discussed articles we published in 1927 was "Wanted: A Substitute for Righteousness," in which ***Avis D. Carlson,*** formerly an instructor at one of the large coeducational universities of the Middle West, argued that the young people of to-day are more easily won to æsthetic than to moral standards of conduct. Mrs. Carlson, who is now living in Wichita, Kansas, returns to the discussion this month by showing the close connection between beauty and religion, both in her own experience and in principle.

We bring to a close in this issue *Wilbur*

Daniel Steele's remarkable serial, in which he has conclusively shown his ability to give to a novel those qualities of vividness, intensity, and dramatic force which have won the admiration of thousands of readers of his short stories. "Meat" is to be published at once in book form. Mr. Steele is now spending the winter in Charleston, South Carolina, but with the coming of spring will presumably return to New England.

The poets—in addition to Thomas Hardy, of whom mention is made above—are ***Mary Brent Whiteside,*** a Georgian who has frequently contributed to the Magazine and in 1925 won the ballad prize offered by the *Poetry Review* of London; ***Margaret Widdemer*** of New York, who has long stood high among American poets (she shared with Carl Sandburg the Pulitzer poetry prize for 1918 by reason of her book *Old Road to Paradise*), and in recent years has written novels as well; and ***Sterling North*** of Chicago, a new contributor.

The Lion's Mouth contributors include ***Alexander Black,*** newspaperman, pioneer (in the nineties) in motion pictures, and author of *The Great Desire* and other novels; ***Charles A. Bennett,*** professor of philosophy at Yale, author of a recent HARPER article on "The Cult of the Seamy Side," and constant Lion's Mouth contributor; and ***Francis Hackett,*** who like Professor Bennett is an Irishman, and since he left the staff of *The New Republic* has lived much in Ireland, engaged in writing novels.

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The etching which we reproduce as the frontispiece of this issue is the work of a man for whom—despite his great skill—etching is an avocation. ***Charles Adams Platt*** of New York styles himself in *Who's Who* as "architect, landscape architect, painter" (he does not even mention etching), but it is as an architect that he is chiefly known. He has long been one of the leaders of the profession in the United States.

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Once more a HARPER story has been chosen for the annual O. Henry Prize for the best contribution to short fiction made by an American writer during the year.

The first prize for 1927 (for which all stories published between October, 1926, and September, 1927, inclusive, were eligible) has been awarded to Roark Bradford, of New Orleans, for "Child of God," published in our April issue. HARPER readers will remember this as the story of a young negro who was taken to be hanged and whose arrival in Heaven was described as he would have imagined it. Incidentally that story was Mr. Bradford's first contribution to the Magazine.

Four other HARPER stories (making five in all) were included in the O. Henry collection of fifteen outstanding performances of the year. They were:

"Night Club" by Katharine Brush (September)

"Singing Woman" by Ada Jack Carver (May)

"The Little Girl from Town" by Ruth Suckow (August)

"Shades of George Sand!" by Ellen DuPois Taylor (March)

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Mr. Carey's retort to the feminists in "This Two-Headed Monster: The American Family" has brought us a basketful of letters. "The January HARPER'S was loaded," as one reader put it. "One can only guess how many unsuspecting wives received it into their homes and innocently left it on the living-room table to corrupt their husbands. By the time the children had been tucked in, friend husband was all ready to preach the gospel of sweet submission to the astonished woman voter of his bosom, and no doubt the American Home was in a considerable twitter for the rest of the evening. We shall all be interested to read some of the replies which the wives of this free land have written to the editor, during the small hours, after their husbands had crept, sore and battered, away to their lonely beds."

The replies—from husbands as well as wives—represent all sorts of points of view. There is some enthusiastic support for Mr. Carey. A reader who signs herself Alumna, for example, writes from New Haven as follows: